DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 435 522 RC 022 140

AUTHOR	Miller, Robert
TITLE	Helping Mexican and Mexican-American Students in the Schools of the East Side Union High School District.
INSTITUTION	San Jose East Side Union High School District, CA.
PUB DATE	1999-09-00
NOTE	68p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Basic Education; American Indian Education; Bilingual Education; *Educational Practices; Educational Strategies; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Illiteracy; Indigenous Populations; *Institutional Characteristics; International Cooperation; *International Programs; *Mexican American Education; Mexican Americans; Mexicans; Parent Participation; *Rural Education
IDENTIFIERS	*Mexico

ABSTRACT

This document provides information about schools in Mexico and suggests ways that U.S. schools can use this information to improve education for Mexican and Mexican American students. Chapter 1 describes the Mexican educational system as a vantage point for understanding the expectations of Mexican parents in the United States. This chapter covers the organization of the Mexican school system, recent changes in administrative functions from the federal government to the states, textbooks, curriculum in the primaria (grades 1-6) and secundaria (grades 7-9), enrollments, program options and educational practices in the secundaria, distance education in rural areas, the media superior level (grades 10-12), and private schools. Chapter 2 discusses problems and special strategies in rural areas, bilingual education for indigenous peoples, adult education and literacy campaigns, and 1995 illiteracy rates by age groups for the general and indigenous populations. Chapter 3 examines the development of binational educational cooperation and describes various national and state projects such as teacher and faculty exchanges, provision of Mexican textbooks and adult education materials to U.S. programs, student exchanges, immigrant services, and bilingual teacher education. Chapter 4 focuses on strengths of Mexican students, culturally relevant teacher strategies, ways to promote parent involvement, and implications of characteristics of effective schools. Appendices list school strategies relevant to Hispanic students, organizations that focus on helping Mexican and Mexican-American students, and Web sites on Mexico. (Contains 46 references and an index.) (SV)

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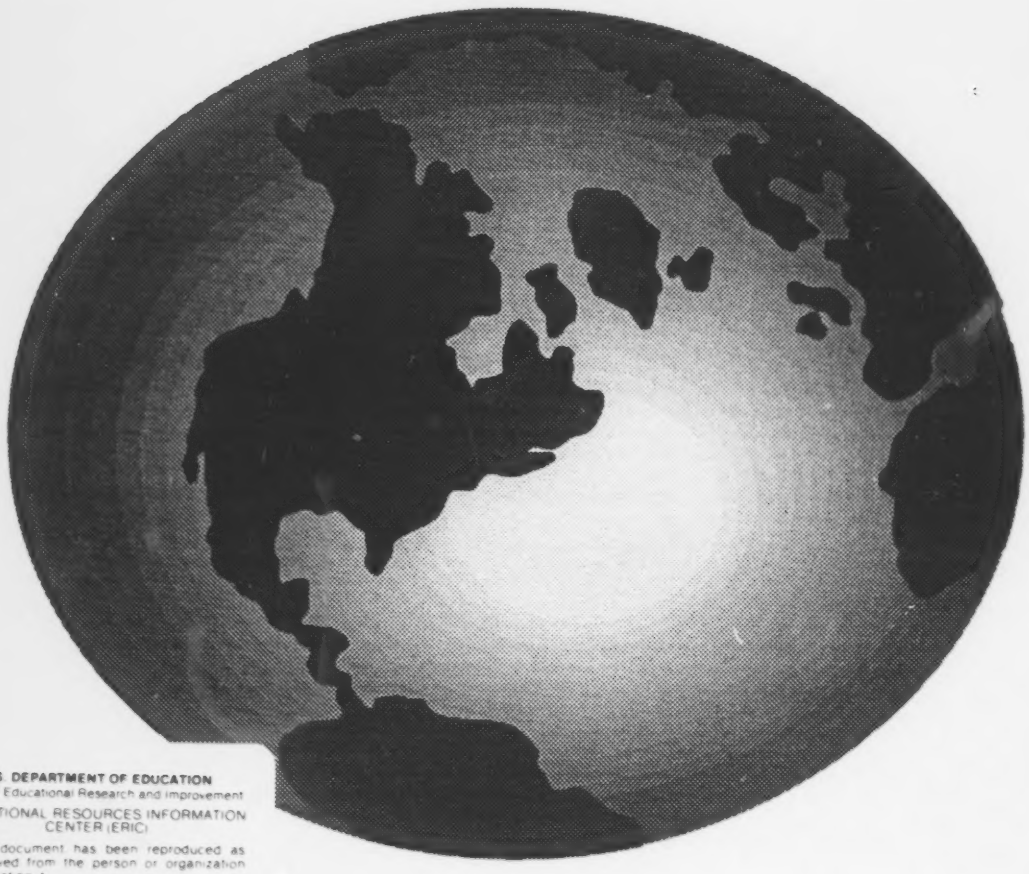

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Helping Mexican And Mexican-American Students In The Schools Of The East Side Union High School District

Robert Miller

East Side Union High School District
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September 1999

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Introduction

"We Mexicans have particular ideas about the world; we value truth, demand respect, honor, and we want to be consulted about things that concern us. Also, we have strong feelings about our country, our flag, our national hymn and our history."

--Maria Cristina Rodriquez Ramirez,
Directora , Escuela Primaria
"Estado de Hidalgo (11-0515)

The good news is that Mexican and Mexican-American students are making gains in the public schools. However, these students are still behind the gains of the other groups. Taken as a group, Hispanics have a lower graduation rate and a lower education rate than Blacks, Anglos and Asian immigrants. According to the National Council of La Raza, in 1997, 54.7% of Hispanics 25 years and older obtained a high school diploma as compared to 83% of the Anglos and 74.9% of the Blacks. In terms of a bachelor's degree or more, 10.3% of the Hispanics, 74.9% of the Anglos and 13.3% of the blacks held these degrees.[1] Wages were much lower for Hispanic workers overall. In 1996, Hispanic, white, and black workers had median family incomes of $26,179, $44,756, and $26,522 respectively.[2]

As educators in the East Side Union High School District we have worked to help our Mexican and Mexican-American students achieve. I have been an ESL, English and Reading teacher in the district since 1970 and I have worked at Foothill, Piedmont Hills, Yerba Buena, Oak Grove and Mt. Pleasant High Schools. My concern has been with increasing the achievement of Mexican and Mexican-American students.

For the past twenty years, I have been studying the educational system of Mexico and examining ways that we can incorporate their ideas to help Mexican and Mexican-American students in the United States succeed. The original study was done during the 1978-79 school year where I studied official documents, interviewed officials from the Secretaría de Educación Pública (The Ministry of Education is called the SEP) and then wrote a description of the system and the process of teaching literacy. Of course, as any good educator knows, this reality is very different from the day to day survival strategies used in the schools. To balance the official description, I asked the SEP to recommend thirty schools in different parts of Mexico City. Then, I devised a questionnaire for the teachers in the school, observed one class in each school and interviewed both the director of the school and the teacher. In all, I obtained 300 questionnaires from the teachers, I

observed in twenty-six classrooms for a total of twenty-three hours and interviewed twenty-six teachers and directors. All of this provided a more accurate view of the Mexican school system. (And a doctoral dissertation) In 1989, ten years after the original study, I visited twelve of the original schools, gave questionnaires to the teachers, observed in the classes and interviewed both the teacher and the directors. During September and October of 1998, the complete study was replicated. Over the past twenty years, thirteen visits were made to Mexico, 632 questionnaires were analyzed, over one hundred visits were made to schools where directors and teachers were interviewed, seventy classrooms were visited and more than one hundred officials in various agencies of the Mexican government were interviewed. In addition to Mexico City, schools and educational facilities were visited in the states of Jalisco, Oaxaca, México, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, and Michoacán.

As part of my sabbatical leave project, I agreed to provide information about the schools of Mexico and to suggest ways that we can use this information to help our students. This book has been written in partial fulfillment of the requirements of my sabbatical.

Four questions provide the framework for this project. 1) What are the expectations of Mexican parents regarding education? This book presents a description of the Mexican school system and its evolution over the past twenty years. Included in the margin are highlights of the Mexican educational system. Much time is devoted to the primary school because many Mexican parents do not have more than an elementary school education. 2) Since many Mexican students are from rural areas, how do these schools differ from the ones in the cities? Included in this section is information on adult and indigenous education. 3) What Mexican programs are available in the United States? This section provides information on programs, some of which can be used in the East Side Union High School District. 4) What strategies produce results in the classroom, engage parents, and increase the success rate of Mexican and Mexican-American students? Four teacher strategies, five parent strategies and thirteen schoolwide strategies are discussed.

The information in this book comes from published research articles, my research, and programs implemented at Yerba Buena High School under the direction of P. César Romero. I also draw heavily from *Twenty Years Of Literacy Instruction In Mexico: Strategies to help Students of Mexican Origin in the United States*, a book that I have written.

Chapter 1
What Are The Expectations Of Mexican Parents Regarding Education?

The key to educational success is found in the home. Parents are role models who encourage their children and provide the physical and moral support needed for the students to succeed. It is important that they understand the school system in the United States and their role within that system.

The Mexican parents have attended school in Mexico or know people that have attended school in Mexico, therefore, their mental pictures are often based on Mexican schools. When educators in the ESUHSD discuss education and expectations of students there may be a mismatch because the words may be the same, but the concept may be different. When ESUHSD educators understand Mexican education, they can address the concerns of parents with greater clarity.

Mexican education is centralized. The SEP controls the curriculum, the textbooks, teacher training and coordinates the system. States are responsible for the upkeep of the schools.

Organization of the Mexican School System

Unlike California with over 1,000 special districts devoted to education, Mexico has a system of education that is coordinated from the national level. Article three of the current Mexican constitution provides that primary and secondary education be secular, all education given by the state shall be free, and all instruction given in private institutions shall be supervised by the state. The Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP) has the responsibility for education in Mexico.

The Secretarío de Educación Pública is the leader of the SEP and receives assistance from six sub-secretaries. It is noteworthy that the secretaries of education have degrees in fields other than education and most went abroad to earn their graduate degrees. (The current secretary has his graduate degree from the University of Aix-Marseille in France. He received a degree in law and has a doctorate in public administration.)

The Sub-secretary of Educational Coordination is responsible for developing the programs, the budget, evaluation systems, and for dealing with the computer center. Included in this area is the Department of International Relations which has an extensive worldwide program. This department works with UNESCO, the OAS and various countries.

The Sub-secretary of Basic and Normal Education is in charge of pre-schools, primary schools, special education and education for the indigenous people. When they eliminated the

Sub-secretary of Middle Education, the secondary schools, technical schools, media superior schools, training for physical education teachers and teacher training became the responsibility of the Sub-secretary of Basic Education.

The Sub-secretary of Superior Education and Scientific Investigation focuses on the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, scientific investigation and requirements for the professions. The Sub-secretary of Technological Investigation supervises the agricultural schools, industrial education, technological institutes and the Polytechnical University. Finally, the unit of information, rights of authors, and decentralization are under the Sub-secretary of Planning and Coordination. The Oficialia Mayor is responsible for labor relations, and the gathering of statistical information.

The council on culture and the arts, the National Institute on Anthropology and History, the Belles Artes, radio education, and the National Commission on Sports are decentralized units and report directly to the Secretario de Educación Pública.

To ensure that the various areas do not overlap, four councils coordinate the educational activities. The Consejo Nacional de la Educación (The National Council on Education-CONALTE) is the most important, and controls the entire system. Other councils advise on contents and methods, normal school education and technological education.[3]

From the start of the schools movement in 1921 until 1992, the federal government was in charge of most of the schools. There were relatively few state schools and even less private schools. The curriculum mandated teachers to teach approximately the same things at the same time.

In 1972, the widespread discontent among teachers and administrators resulted in major revision of the entire curriculum. Changes focused on the normal school program, the system for teaching language and changes in curriculum for the other subjects and programs. There were minor changes in 1981 and in 1988.

Starting in 1989 there have been historic changes in Mexico. Carlos Salinas de Gotari, elected president in 1989, held a doctorate in economics from Harvard University. His goal was to modernize Mexico. He sold most of the state owned businesses, increased foreign investments in Mexico through reduction of the interest rate and stabilization of the peso. In addition, he changed the role of the union. Caciques or labor bosses were responsible for controlling workers. In return for this service, they received special privileges from the government. When Salinas first became president, he ordered the arrest of the leader of the oil workers' union, Joaquín Hernández Galicia. The army moved in and guarded oil facilities before the arrest. This action empowered workers and in 1989, the teachers demanded that their labor boss

be replaced. Strikes and marches forced Jonguitud Barrios to end his seventeen year rule of the teacher's union. (SNTE) Directors of the schools marched in front of their teachers in huge marches: with the largest numbering 250,000 people. Barrios was replaced and from 1989 until 1992 there were strikes primarily because of the economic crisis. In January of 1992, Salinas enacted a new plan for education. Dr. Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León, a 40 year old Yale educated economist replaced the 52 year old Díaz Barlett as the Minister of Education. (Zedillo is now President of Mexico.) The "Acuerdo National" an emergency plan to implement the program was in place in September of 1992.[4] The "Acuerdo" had several parts.

The school year lasts 200 days. The leaders in Mexico have degrees in fields other than education

The first part was the reorganization of the school system. Each state took over most administrative functions formerly performed by the SEP. In essence, school were of two types, federal schools in Mexico City and state schools in the rest of the country. The states received the responsibility of developing material that represents the different history, geography, customs and traditions of the various states as well as the operation and maintenance of the schools. The goal was to provide a uniform system in each state. However, there remains a difference between state and federal pay. All minimum pay raises are negotiated on a national level, so the pay disparity between types of schools will continue even thought the states manage the schools and the teachers do the same work.[5] As part of the plan, the school year was expanded to 200 days.

During 1997, *Educación 2001,* a Mexican magazine, profiled the secretary of education from each state and from the Distrito Federal. Of the thirty-three individuals, five were engineers, eight were lawyers, five were economists, two were accountants, one was a public administrator and one was a scientist. Eleven worked in education ranging from university professors to a primary school teacher. Three of the total were women[6]

The second part of the "Acuerdo" focused on curriculum. New books were available for the 1993-94 school year. The SEP produced an emergency guide and teachers received training in August of 1992. During the 1992-93 school year, teachers used the old textbooks. For the primary school, the new emphasis was on cursive writing, critical thinking, and task based instruction

There was less emphasis on the structural linguistic approach and teachers were free to choose their method for initial reading instruction. The emphasis was on history, geography and civics. In math, the emphasis focused on the concepts of logic, algebra and geometry. In the secondary school program emphasis was on teaching by subject. For example: courses in biology, chemistry and physics replaced general science in the new curriculum.

Teachers earn 3.9 times the minimum wage per day. The minimum wage is approximately $4.00 per day

The third part of the "Acuerdo" was to ensure a professional wage to teachers. An average teacher's salary went from 1.5 times the minimum wage to 3.5 times the minimum wage. Currently, teachers at the lowest level on the salary schedule make 3.9 times the minimum wage.[7]

Teachers in the primary schools obtained a greater say in the methods they use and, in exchange, the government required additional education and training for teachers. On paper, it looked as though the colonial control of the past had been cast off and the modern era had begun. However, the textbooks are still printed by the federal government, the teacher training programs are approved by the federal government and the Secretario de Educación Pública negotiates with each state concerning the budget it will receive for the schools that used to be under federal control. The federal government retains much of its control over the educational system.

Budget

Preschools, primary schools and secondary schools receive 69% of the budget allocated to schools.

The budget for the Secretaría de Educación Pública is about five percent of Mexico's gross domestic product (GDP). In 1997, the total budget allotment for education was 155 billion pesos.[8] As with most systems of allocation, budgets themselves have little meaning because as the year progresses, there are changes in priorities, and there are situations that require immediate attention. However, the percentage allocations to programs represent what the Mexican government perceives as important.

Sixty-nine percent of the 106 billion pesos directly allocated to schools was for basic education that included pre-schools, primary schools, special education, secondary schools, and the telesecundaria program. The second largest item in the budget was for universities and colleges (18%), followed by 13% for media superior schools (grades 10-12 in the U.S.) and technical schools.[9]

Textbooks and the Curriculum

Another area common to all primary school education in Mexico is the textbook program. The Comisión Nacional de Los Libros de Texto Gratuitos (National Commission on Free Textbooks) is responsible for printing the textbooks for all students in Mexico. In the early 1960s, there was a decision to have a national textbook. Nineteen different groups of people in the country provided their opinions on textbook content. The first books stressed a different theme at each grade level--the community, the state, the country, the continent and in the sixth grade, the world.[10]

Because of differences in political philosophies, the textbook program has been the center of controversy. In 1962, 300,000

parents held a demonstration because of the new textbooks oriented toward the philosophies of Castro and Marx. The October 1988, *Mexico Journal* featured an article noting "the textbooks also received notoriety in the form of complaints from conservative parents and business organizations that say the textbooks are a form of state indoctrinate that does not represent private initiative and family values."[11]

In 1972, the decision to reform the educational system occurred. The 1960 books were rewritten. A commission wrote plans, which included monthly objectives and activities. Next, they created textbooks and teacher's manuals for each grade. For the first time, texts incorporated the works of famous authors.

All students use the same books throughout Mexico. The books for the primary school are free.

Again, in 1980, new first grade books were introduced. The series included a teacher's manual, a Libro Recortable (readiness book) and parts I and II of the primer. Under the new plan, the school year divided into eight units with each unit containing four modules. Within each unit was material to teach reading, mathematics, natural science and social science. The teacher's manual contained information on how to teach health and art.

The reforms of 1992 criticize the rationale that had been the basis of the literacy curriculum for the previous fourteen years. The Plan and Programs book stated that the official method was not working and that teachers needed to return to the old methods.[12]

One interesting aspect of the system is the emphasis the current administration places on the textbooks. The president promised in 1997 and again in 1998 that all textbooks would be delivered before school started at the end of August. This was done through the use of the military and through private companies. Army helicopters landed in remote indigenous villages with textbooks and naval vessels delivered books to villages only accessible by water. Arguably, Coca Cola has the most extensive distribution system in the world. Their trucks loaded with beverages, also delivered textbooks to isolated locations.[13]

For the twenty years prior to the new changes, only printing was taught in the primary schools.

In the secundaria, private companies print the textbooks and they are free for students who cannot afford to buy them. Right now this program is for grades one and two of the secondary school. Some states buy the textbooks for all the secondary students with state funds. It is expected that within three years, all textbooks will be free.[14]

Under the new system of education, language and mathematics have become the most important parts of the primary school curriculum. Table 1 focuses on the number of hours teachers spend per week on each subject. In the first and second grades the students study Spanish, mathematics and integrated program that covers natural science, history geography and civics, art and

Primary school students are in class for 4 1/2 hours per day and secondary school students attend for 7 hours per day

Table 1

Subjects And Time Spent Per Week In The Schools

Subjects And Time Spent Per Week In The Primaria

Subject	grades 1&2	grades 3-6
Spanish	9	6
Mathematics	6	5
Integrated program	3	--
Natural Science	--	3
History	--	1.5
Geography	--	1.5
Civics	--	1
Art	1	1
Physical Education	1	1
Total	20	20

Table 2

Subjects And Time Spent Per Week In The Secundaria

Subject	grade 1	grade 2	Grade 3
Spanish	5	5	5
Mathematics	5	5	5
World History	3	3	--
History of Mexico	--	--	3
General Geography	3		--
Geography of Mexico	--	2	
Educational Orientation	--	--	3
Civics	3	2	
Elective	--	--	3
Biology	3	2	--
Intro. Physics & Chem.	3	--	
Physics	--	3	3
Chemistry	--	3	3
Foreign Language	3	3	3
Artistic Expression	2	2	2
Physical Education	2	2	2
Technology	3	3	3
Total	35	35	35

Source: *Plan y Programas* p.14

physical education. During grades 3-6, the students study Spanish, mathematics, natural science, history, geography, civics, art, and physical education. About 45% of the time in grades 1 and 2 is devoted to language instruction verses 30% in grades 3-6.[15]

Table 2 focuses on the secundaria. The students attend the secundaria for seven hours per day.

The System of Education

Before discussing the system of education, it would be useful to chart the numbers of students in each level. In the early 1990's the decision was made that basic education should include the three years of secondary school and the goal was to have all Mexicans educated to this level. Chart 1, a pie chart, shows that 11.3% of the students are enrolled in preschool (preescolar), 55.9% are enrolled in the primaria, 17.1% are enrolled in the secundaria, 9.5 are enrolled in media superior and 6.2% are enrolled in superior education.[16]

Basic education includes six years in the primaria and three years in the secundaria

Chart 1
Percentage of Students Enrolled in the Different Levels

Preescolar from ages 4-6 is voluntary. At age 6, the students enter the primaria and attend for 6 years until age 12. Students going on to the university will attend the secundaria for 3 years and a media superior school for 3 years. Those going to trade schools will start right after the secundaria or the secundaria will serve as a trade school for some occupations. Superior refers to those students in teacher training schools, universities and those doing post graduate work.

Preschool is from ages 4-6. Primary school is from ages 6-12 (grades 1-6). Secundaria is from ages 12-15 (grades 1-3) and media superior is from ages 15-18 (grades 1-3)

The Secundaria

Secondary education is becoming more important in Mexico. In 1998-99 there were 14.6 million students enrolled in federal, state, and private primarias. This compares with five million students enrolled in the secundaria.[17]

The students in the secondary school remain in the class and the teachers rotate

The breakdown of students in the secundaria is as follows: general secundaria 51%, technical programs 29%, telesecundaria 19% and secundarias for workers 1%. After a student completes six years of the primaria, he/she is able to enroll in the secundaria for three more years.

The secundaria level contains several options. Students can enroll in a general program, a vocational program or in the secundaria program offered through television. Since 1982, a movement to build secundarias has resulted in dramatic increases in the number of schools. In 1978-79 there were only 7,711 secundarias in the country. By June of 1998 there were 26,743 secundarias.[18] Of the total, 958 were federal, 22,798 were state run and 2,989 were private.[19]

The teachers have several options to receive the training necessary to work in the secundaria. Those planning a teaching career in the secundaria can attend the primaria, secundaria, media superior and then the normal superior. Those teachers who work in the primaria can attend the normal superior or the Universidad Nacional Pedagógica (UPN) to specialize in a subject taught in the secundaria. Many primary school teachers also work in the secundaria. In the 1989 survey given to teachers, about 14 percent of the primary school teachers said that they also worked in the secundaria.

The classes in the secundaria are 50 minutes long, and the teachers rotate between the classes. The school day lasts for seven hours. Students take Spanish, mathematics, biology, physics, chemistry, social science, geography, history, civics a foreign language, physical education, artistic education and technology.

At General Francisco Villa Escuela Secundaria in Mexico City, first year English students were studying possessives. Using the teaching method typically found in Mexico, the teacher wrote different items on the board, the students copied them in their notebooks, and one or two students went to the board to complete the sentences.

In a second-year English class, the students were reviewing the structure of English. Each student answered the questions in English.

In a third-year Spanish class, the teacher was reviewing regular and irregular verbs. Students stood up and recited the answers to the questions. After the drills, the students copied the information into their notebooks. This secundaria had the highest graduation rate in Mexico City for 1982. About 83

percent of the class graduated. Teachers indicated that between 70 and 80 percent of the students graduated from an average secundaria. Official statistics for the nation from the 1997-98 school year (some 15 years later) show a graduation rate of 89.8%.[20] As part of the modernization curriculum, the teaching of English focuses on a student's fluency rather than with correcting grammatical mistakes through the of use role playing and task-based instruction. However, these methods are not commonly used in the Mexican schools. Many teachers of English can read and write English but their oral English skills are deficient.

All students take a foreign language for three years.

There are other aspects to the modernization program for the secundaria. The rewritten curriculum for the first grade of the secundaria was implemented in September of 1992. This curriculum included history, geography and civics. Also, the number of hours spent studying Spanish and mathematics increased. Areas no longer are studied, but rather specific subjects within the area. In math, reasoning and estimation are emphasized.

There are three grades in the secundaria 1, 2 and 3. These are equal to 7, 8, and 9 in the U.S.

Besides the general secundarias, there are several types of vocational secundarias. The schools include secundarias for workers, secundarias for industrial training, agricultural and forestry training. In addition, there are secundarias for marine training and bilingual secundarias.

In rural areas, books and television programs help the people learn. Mexico has 14,101 telesecundarias and broadcasts originate from Mexico City via the Solidaridad satellites.[21] The telesecundaria provides a cheaper alternative to the regular secondary school. With this program, there is only one teacher per class verses the several specialized teachers found in the regular secundaria. The schools are small and each room has a television set. Programs are professionally produced in Mexico City using actors. The program lasts 15 minutes and the students use workbooks for the other 35 minutes. At exactly 8:05 the first program of the day begins with the mathematics lesson for grade one of the secondary school. Broadcast of the mathematics lesson for grade two of the secondary school occurs fifteen minutes later. Finally, fifteen minutes later, the third year program is shown. This continues all day and the order is mathematics, Spanish, natural science, social science, English, art, and technological education. There are 176 lessons divided into eight units. The students take an exam after they complete a unit.

The bachillerato is the equivalent of a high school diploma.

A typical fifteen minute television program starts with the lesson objective, followed by the teaching of the concept. Next, a short skit focuses on the practical application of the concept. Finally, there is a review. After the television program is over the

teacher reviews the concept on the blackboard and the students work in their books.

I visited a telesecundaria in Oaxaca in October of 1998. The school was on a country road and it looked like a typical elementary school-- five classrooms, a basketball court, and a director's office. Of course, the satellite dish on top of the school indicated that it was a telesecundaria. Each classroom contained a television and the students were watching the programs. The instructors told me that the television program was the introduction to the subject and through the use of the textbooks, student notebooks and the chalkboard, they taught the students.

In summary, there are three options for a student in the secundaria. The first option is to enroll in a general secundaria. Students in these programs enter a profession. The second option is a vocational secundaria that offers industrial training, agricultural, forestry, or marine training. Finally, students in rural areas and small towns often are educated in the telesecundaria. During the 1997-98 school year 890,400 students in 14,101 schools participated in the telesecundaria program.[22]

Media Superior Schools

Upon completing the secundaria, students move to the media superior level. The schools focus on students aged 15-18 and when the students finish, they have the bachillerato which is equivalent to a high school diploma.

About 58% of the graduates of the secundaria in 1997-98 enrolled in the general bachillerato program. The object of this program is to prepare the students to continue their studies and enter the university or the normal school. This program focuses on developing the character of the students, basic education, scientific thought, and language instruction. Also, as part of the general bachillerato, the students have the option of either attending school or using the open preparatoria program on television. In the open preparatoria, students study at their pace and can take as long as they need to complete the requirements.

About 28% of the students are in the bachillerato tecnologico program. This course of study has two functions--the students can go directly to work or they can opt to study technical fields at the university. As of August 1997, there were seventeen specializations offered. The students can choose advanced study in industrial technology, agriculture, fishing and forestry. These programs provide marketplace skills so that the students can terminate their education or they can continue and receive the BA at institutions like the Polytechnical Institute. The students can enroll in the Colegio de Bachilleres that administers 516 schools. The Colegio

has the main campus in Mexico City and branches in 20 other states.[23]

There are no general education requirements at the university.

Media Superior schools provide the equivalent of a high school diploma. Students can study for two years in the areas of industrial technology, agriculture, marine technology or forestry. Those going on to the university can specialize in scientific, chemical biological or social fields. Teachers can enroll in a special program with the last year of the preparatoria devoted to the study of education.

In Mexico, there are no general education requirements at the university level. Students attend the primaria for six years, the secundaria for three years and a media superior school for three years. When they enter the university, they immediately take courses in their chosen profession.

Private Schools

Less than 10% of the students attend private schools.

Besides controlling the curriculum of the public schools, the SEP and the state government also supervise private schools. The inspector for the district is responsible for ensuring that the private school conforms to the rules established by the SEP and the state government. Private schools can receive permission to modify their curriculum. For example, there are American schools, French schools and Japanese schools in Mexico City.

At the primary school level in 1992-93, 91% of the students in the country attended public schools and 9% attended private schools.. In the secondary school level, 88% of the students attended public schools and 12% attended private schools.[24]

The Secretaría de Educación Pública is responsible for formal and cultural education in Mexico from birth until age 18. Preschools, primarias, secundarias and media superior schools as well as private schools are supervised by the SEP. In addition, the SEP trains teachers, educates adults, provides plans and programs, and coordinates the entire system. Cultural activities are provided to the entire population. This entails a tremendous bureaucracy. The states are responsible for the buildings and the administration of the schools.

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[1]Maria Fisher, *Latino Educational Status and Prospects State of Hispanic America 1998* (Washington: National Council of La Raza,1998) p.76

2 Fisher, p. 9

[3] Since the SEP is in a state of constant change, updated information can be found on the SEP's website http.//www.sep.gob.mx

[4] Secretaría de Educación Pública "Acuerdo Nacional Para La Modernización De La Educación Básica"(Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, May 18, 1992)

[5] Interview with Profra. Blanca Margarita Fuentes, SNTE, in Mexico City, October 22, 1998.

[6]"¿Quien Gobierna la Educación en México?"*Educación 2001.* Part one appeared in March (pp. 6-12) and part two (pp. 8-14) appeared in April of 1997.

[7] Secretaría de Educación Pública *Informe De Labores 1997-98* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, July 1998) p.71

[8] Secretaría de Educación Pública "Perfil De La Educación En Mexico Financiamiento De La Educación" (http.//www.sep.gob.mx) p.3.

[9] Perfil p.3

[10] Robert Miller, *Public Primary School Education In Mexico: A Focus On Reading Instruction In Mexico City.* (Ed.D. dissertation, University of San Francisco, 1980) pp. 64-65

[11] "The Textbook Controversy" *Mexico Journal* (October 3, 1988) p.19.

[12] Secretaría de Educación Pública, *Plan Y Programas De Estudio* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1993) p. 9-13

[13] Interview with Prof. Rafael Miranda of the Comisión Nacional de Los Libros de Texto Gratuitos, Mexico City, October 15, 1998.

.[14]Prof. Rafael Miranda

[15] *Plan y Programas 97-98* p.14

[16] *Informe de Labores 97-98* p.223

[17] *Informe de Labores 97-98* p.223

[18] *Informe de Labores 97-98*p.351

[19] *Informe de Labores 97-98* p.219

[20] *Informe de Labores 97-98* p.219

[21] *Informe de Labores 97-98* p.261

[22] *Informe de Labores 97-98* p.261

[23] Interview with Blanca Gonzalez Rodriguez, Coordinadora de Centros de Bachillerato Pedagógico, Mexico City, March 10, 1989. The data for the 1997-98 year came from the *Informe.*

[24] "Las Escuelas Particulares En La Educación", *Educación 2001* (February 1996) p. 34

Chapter 2
Since Many Mexican Students Are From Rural Areas, How Do These Schools Differ From The Ones In The Cities?

Many of the students in the schools in the ESUHSD are from ranchos in the countryside. These schools present a challenge that is different from schools in the city. Rural schools in Mexico are plentiful because people do not have adequate transportation and the roads often are impassable during storms. They are built so that the children can walk to them. In Mexico, there are 200,000 localities and 75% have less than 100 inhabitants.[1] It is estimated that of the 84 million people in Mexico, 23 million live in rural areas.[2] During a teacher's strike in May of 1997, teachers from the poorest regions in Mexico told of teachers and students who must walk through rough terrain for hours to get to school. Four walls with no roof and dirt floors pass for school buildings and many of the teachers said that they must buy school supplies from their salaries.[3]

75% of the 200,000 localities in Mexico have less than 100 people.

The government recognizes the problems with rural schools and has several compensatory programs. The first program is PARE (Programa para Abatar el Rezago Educativo) and it serves regular primary rural and indigenous schools in the states of Chiapas, Guerrero, Hidalgo and Oaxaca. This program began in 1991-92. PAREB (Programa para Abatar el Rezago en Educación Basica) started in 1994-95 and serves primary and secondary schools in the states of Campeche, Durango, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacán, Puebla, San Luis Potosí, Tabasco, Veracruz and Yucatán. PIARE (Programa Integral para Abitir el Rezago Educativo.) began in 1995 and this program serves initial education, preschool, primary schools and adult education. The program serves regular primary school education, rural schools and indigenous schools in the states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, Colima, Mexico, Nayarit, Querétaro, Quintana Roo, Sinaloa, Sonora and Zacatecas and beginning education in twenty-two states. Through this program, education to smaller communities in 23 states is provided. The next program is Programa para el Desarrollo de la Educación Inicial (PRODEI) This program started in 1991 and works with children under four years old. The program operates in the states of Chiapas, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Mexico, Michoacán, Oaxaca, Puebla San Luis Potosí and Yucatan. Finally, the Programa de Apoyo a Escuelas en Desventaja (PQED) started in 1992, and operates 100 schools for the disadvantaged.

These schools are in states where PARE, PAREB, and PIARE do not have programs.[4]

School supplies are give to students from rural areas.

Under these programs, packets were developed for students and during the 1997-98 school year over 94,000 were distributed. The packets included: pencils, colored pencils, crayons, erasers, notebooks, and protractors. Over 90,000 helpers, supervisors, and school directors received special training through these programs. They built 2,900 more spaces for classes, added additions to existing schools and repaired and maintained school facilities. Also, parent associations were formed and by the end of the 97-98 year 14,000 associations were in existence. About 5,000 pesos were awarded to each association to buy blackboards, paint the school, etc.[5]

About 150,000 Mexican communities have less than 100 inhabitants. The Educación Communitaria Program extends educational services to these communities.. During the 96-97 school year, over 27,000 literacy workers went into 23,708 communities to teach the children.[6]

There are not enough literate people in some villages to reinforce what is taught in the schools.

Even though the government is attempting to help the poor, each program has its critics. An evaluation of PARE appeared in *Educación 2001.* The author made several criticisms of the program. 1) The program does not recognize the uniqueness of the rural schools and it tries to use the model of urban schools. 2) There are not enough literate people in many of the communities to reinforce the skills taught in the schools. 3) There is a tremendous amount of migration 4) The majority of the teachers are poor farmworkers and even though they have been to school, they tend to be very provincial and authoritarian in their teaching.[7]

Bilingual Literacy Instruction

As part of the 1989 study, I boarded the evening train to Oaxaca. As I slept, the train made its winding trip south through the mountains to the capital of the state. My first visit was to the SEP office in Oaxaca to obtain a letter of introduction. Next, I took the bus for ten miles over the high desert and it finally stopped on a country road. The school was about ten miles up this road. Luckily, a pick-up truck offered me a ride. I arrived at San Pablo Guila, Oaxaca, a Zapoteco village. The houses were made of adobe and the people slept on the floor rather than on beds. All the teachers and the director were Zapotecs. Bilingual books were available, but they did not use them. The school was very modern and well maintained. It consisted of several buildings constructed on concrete slabs. Inside the director's office were new chairs and tables purchased by the parents and the SEP. The school contained eleven teachers and 308 students. Grades one and two were taught bilingually, but grades 3-6 were taught in Spanish only. There were eleven classes in the school with an average of 28 students per class.

They wanted a secondary school, but there was no money so one would not be built.

The Indigenous People of Mexico.

The poorest people in Mexico are the indigenous people who as of 1997, numbered more than seven million and are part of 52 different ethnic groups. Programs have been developed for these people and Mexican administrations have been involved with the spirit of social responsibility towards the Indians because this is an essential element of the philosophy of the Mexican Revolution.[8] The majority of the indigenous people live in isolated communities in the poorer states of Mexico.

Map of the Indigenous People of Mexico

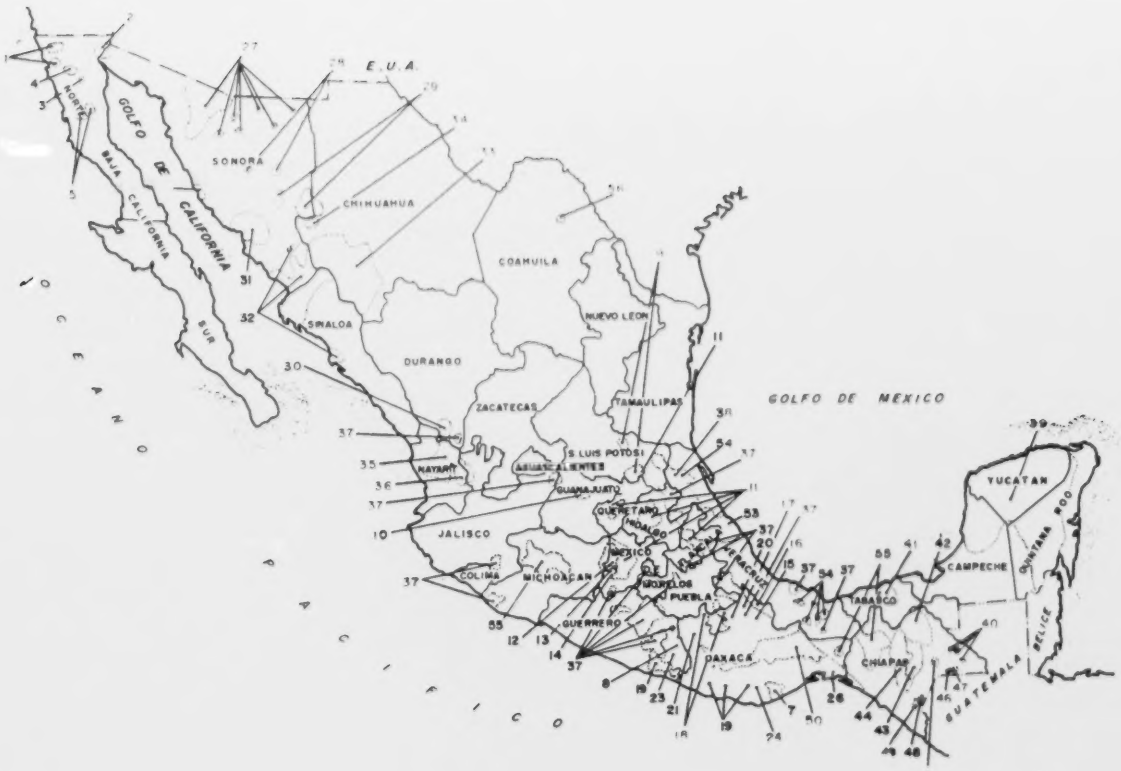

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Table 3
Indigenous People by State

State	Indigenous Population	% of total pop	State	Indigenous Population	% of total pop.
Aguacalientes	771	0.10	Morelos	24, 900	02.08
B. California	22,427	1.35	Nayarit	29,386	03.56
B.C. Sur	3,372	1.06	Nuevo Leon	5,783	00.18
Campeche	105,994	19.08	Oaxaca	1,208,821.	40.00
Chiapas	855,605	27.58	Puebla	611,388	04.80
Chihuahua	74,716	3.05	Queretaro	24,884	2.36
Coahuila	4,513	0.22	Quintana Roo	164,919.	33.40
Colima	1,826	0.42	San Luis Potosí	248,993	12.40
Distrito Federal	134,120	1.60	Sinoloa	37,290.	01.69
Durango	21,901	1.60	Sonora	57,547.	03.15
Guanajuato	10,839	0.27	Tabasco	59,993.	0 3.99
Guerrero	360,374	13.75	Tamaulipas	10,489	0 0.46
Hidalgo	383,655	20.30	Tlaxcala	28,437	0 3.73
Jalisco	30,010	0.56	Veracruz	704,891	11.30
Mexico	397,336	4.00	Yucatan	628,945	46.14
Michoacán	126,756	3.57	Zacatecas	1,081	00.08
Total	6,411,972	07.89			

Source: "Educación Indigena", *Educación 2001* December 1995, p. 6

From the 16th century on the indigenous people have suffered enslavement, forced conversions to Christianity and destruction of their populations by disease. Today, they are at the bottom of Mexican society and throughout history, the Mexican government has tried different approaches to deal with these groups. In 1770, the extinction of Indian languages was ordered. This policy did not work. However, approximately 93 Indian languages have disappeared since the conquest.[9]

Between 1911 and 1917 a system of rural schools was developed primarily for the indigenous population. By 1931, 600,000 students attended 7,000 rural schools with 8,000 teachers. Eighty-one percent of the communities with less than 4,000 people did not have a school. Between 1920 and 1930, only 2% of the students continued beyond the second grade. In 1936, they created the department of Indian Affairs and in 1948, INI (Instituto Nacional Indigenista) was established. INI became the agency responsible for health education and the welfare of indigenous people. In the 1970's, the indigenous people were able to hold legal title to their lands (these titles had been taken away during the Díaz period of 1876-1911) and a great debate began about how best to work with the indigenous peoples. One approach was isolation with INI protection. The goal was to use INI as a buffer with society. The second approach was to bring the indigenous

into the mainstream by preparing them to work in the society. The last approach focused on the government providing essential assistance, but without paternalism and manipulation. Under President Lopez Portillo (76-82), there was greater emphasis on bilingual education. Indigenous language radio stations were developed.

More than 3,000 communities in Chiapas are without access to primary school education.

In 1936, the Summer Institute of Linguistics was invited by Cardenas to transcribe the indigenous languages. This is important because the indigenous languages were written in the Roman alphabet with a very high letter/sound correspondence. Thus, it was easier to transfer the reading skills into Spanish. The members of the institute were basically Christian missionaries and in 1983, they were officially evicted from Mexico. However, in practice, they still continued their work.

Enormous differences exist between indigenous groups. The 1990 census shows that almost no native speakers lived in a band of eight contiguous states from Coahuila to Jalisco to Colima. In the south 26% were in Oaxaca to 32% in Quintana Roo 39% in Chiapas and 44% in Yucutan. Only 63% of the speakers of indigenous languages in Chiapas also speak Spanish.

Indigenous people have remained the most marginalized sector of Mexican society. More than 40% of those 15 years and older were illiterate in 1990, (three times the national rate) and 36% between 6-14 did not attend school.[10] Since the 1960s, the Mexican government has realized the implication of bilingual research which has shown that students learn faster when the native language is used as a vehicle for instruction. However, this is easier said than done. Mexico recognizes 52 ethnic groups and they speak more than 80 languages and dialects. For example, there are only 12 people who speak Opata as compared with 1,197,328 who speak Náhualt.[11] This creates a tremendous problem in finding teachers who speak these languages and in developing textbooks for the various groups. Ludka de Gortari Krauss, the directora of the DGEI (Dirección General de Educación Indigena) stated that 86% of the teachers are with groups that speak the same language.[12] In Chiapas there are more than 3,000 communities without access to elementary school education[13] The Instituto Nacional Indigenista was involved in developing materials for the 52 ethnic groups in Mexico.

Bilingual textbooks are available in 47 languages

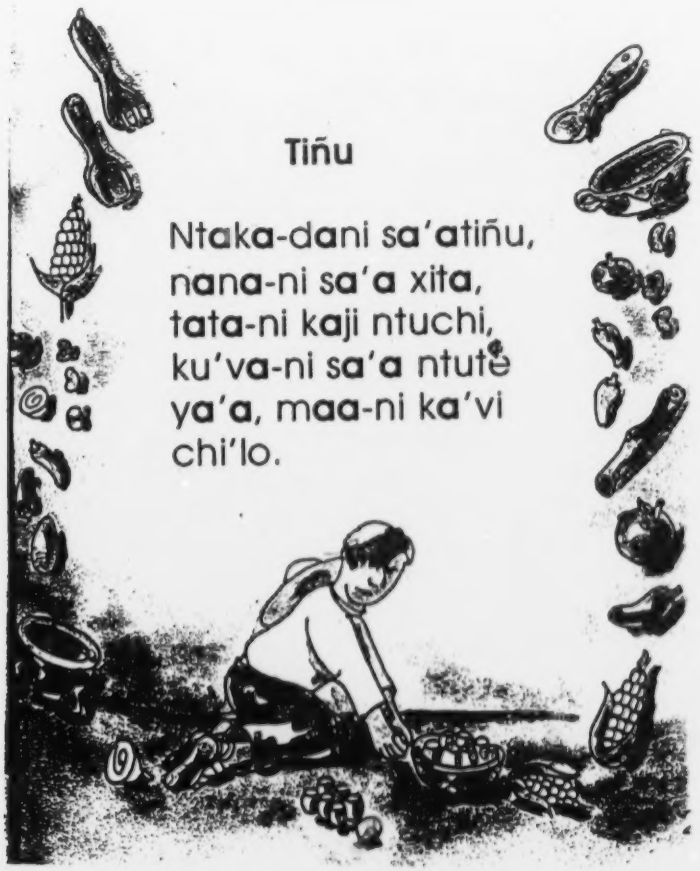
In 1978, a specialized branch of the Secretaría de Educación Pública was created and charged with developing educational programs to increase the literacy rate. (Dirección General de Educación Indigena-DGEI) Their focus is on bilingual textbooks, bilingual radio programs, Centers of Social Integration, albergues escolares, escuelas albergues, and education programs directed at women.

The most ambitious project has been the development of first language textbooks for the 52 ethnic groups and the more than 80 languages and dialects that these people speak. As of this writing, 47 languages and dialects are used in textbooks. This accounts for 70 percent of the students who speak indigenous languages. Last year, over 1,100,000 books were printed.[14]

The series includes full-color textbooks, teacher's manuals, and specific goals and objectives for the teachers. Teaching techniques vary from book to book because native speakers of the Indian language developed the material and the teaching technique. Mexican officials have stated that this system would entice local teachers to use the materials.

Within each set of books for the indigenous group is a book without words in which students manipulate pictures and numbers to learn reading readiness skills such as shapes, color, and direction. Next, the students are given a primer in their native language. After they finish this primer, they can read and write (at a very basic level) in their language. These skills are transferred to special primers which are modified monolingual Spanish primers.

Bilingual Textbook



The radio bilingual education program is designed to teach literacy in the native language, transmit the culture of the native group and teach literacy in Spanish. Teachers from the indigenousareas go to INI facilities and produce radio programs in the native languages. During the day, the stations broadcast music and programs on health, education, infant care, etc. The majority of the indigenous villages do not have electricity thus battery powered radios are used.[15] "Que Hable El Corazon?" (What does your heart say?) is the most popular program. This program focuses on the traditions of the indigenous community using people from this community to read the scripts.[16]

Albergues are boarding schools. Students live in them during the week and then return to their villages on the weekends

Another area of work is with television. In the larger villages, they are equipping 2,000 schools with satellite dishes. The majority of the programs are in Spanish, but 90 programs have been developed around themes for indigenous people.

There are also several forms of special schools that include the Centros de Integración Social, the albergues escolares and the escuelas albergues. The Centros de Integración Social for students over 14 years-old offer training in various occupations. Agriculture is stressed. There are 32 such centers with 5,300 students. The albergues escolares are primary schools that are not bilingual. The students, who are often from very isolated communities, stay at the school from Monday until Friday. There are 1,250 of these centers with 63,900 students. Escuelas albergues are bilingual schools for students aged 6-14. Again, the students stay at the school from Monday until Friday. About 50 boys and girls live in an albergue escolar or an escuela albergue. They live in a dormitory with a supervisor and two cooks. There is a school on the grounds that children from the community and the residents of the albergue attend. The school is run by the DGEI and the dormitory is run by INI. There are 1,076 albergues in 21 states. A typical routine would be: school 8:00-1:00, lunch 1:00-3:00, sports and chores 3:00-7:00, dinner 7:00-8:00 and homework 8:00-9:00.[17]

The last program concerns the development and education of Indian women. This program started in 1978 and ended in 1992. Programs included instruction in literacy in the native language and training in Spanish, care and handling of infants, health education and primary school education. The woman in charge of the center who had from six to nine years of schooling was trained for three months and then received from 15 to 30 days per year of additional training. These programs were conducted in 266 centers, and 10,335 women participated during the 1987-88 school year. There were about 20 women in each center.[18]

This program has been replaced by Centros de Educación Initial for families with children up to age four. There is one teacher for 25 people and they use promotores (individuals

teaching without a secondary school certificate) rather than teachers with 16 years of education. Starting at age 4, the students attend pre-school and then start the primaria at age 6. It is difficult to find primary school teachers for the Indian schools, so their training system is different from the system for regular teachers. Potential teachers go to the primaria, secundaria, and the media superior for a total of twelve years. Next, they attend a special course for six months and then are assigned a classroom. The students learn sanitation and agricultural techniques as well as the academics. During the weekends, summers and during vacation periods, they take courses on how to teach so that they can receive the licenciatura. (The Bachelor of Arts Degree) Given the poverty of the indigenous villages, the salary is relatively high, so more men work as primary school teachers. Also, they receive ninety days of extra pay at Christmas.[19]

There are many educational programs for indigenous people. INI handles the living conditions of albergues escolares, and the DGEI handles initial education, preschool, primarias, and secundarias that service over 100 people. INEA (adult education institute) provides bilingual textbooks for adults and CONAFE provides pre-school and primary school in communities with less than 100 people. Teachers in the CONAFE program are students fulfilling their social service requirements.

The Mexican government is committed to improving literacy among the non-Spanish speaking population. Through the help provided from bilingual textbooks, trained bilingual teachers, special schools, and radio, and television programs, this population is learning how to read and write in Spanish as well as in the native language.

Adult Education

The routine actions of people often provide insight into the major problems of a society. I was on a bus heading for the coast and we stopped outside Tepic. An older man's spouse needed to use the bathroom. It was obvious that they could not read the signs above the doors. She ended up in the men's room and he stood guard outside. How powerless it must feel to be surrounded by the written word and not be able to understand.

Illiteracy is a problem that plagues Mexican society. It is impossible to create a modern society without addressing the educational needs of the population. This realization has forced Mexicans to experiment with many techniques and schemes to reduce the illiteracy rate and to educate the population.

A History of Literacy Campaigns and Programs

At the time of the Mexican revolution, over two thirds of the Mexican population could not read or write. Besides increasing the availability of primary schools, anti-illiteracy campaigns were inaugurated in the 1920's and 1930's. In the 1940's, a sweeping effort to have "each one teach one" produced observable results.[20] In the campaign of 1944-46, ten million cartillas and workbooks were printed and distributed.[21] These books were printed for adults and the approach was primarily phonetic.

Over two-thirds of the population in 1921 could not read nor write

The "Ley De Emergencia Que Establece La Campaña Nacional Contra El Analfabetismo" was the legal basis for this program. The law divided into three parts: 1) organization from August 21, 1944, to the end of February 1945, 2) teaching between the first of March 1945 and the end of February 1946, and 3) revision and tabulation of results between March 1, 1946 and May 31, 1946.

The 1970 census reported that Mexico had 6.7 million illiterates and one million more people who did not speak Spanish. In this group of thirteen million adults (over fifteen years old) that were considered literate, more than nine million had not studied above the fourth grade. The response to these statistics was a new program, Educación Para Todos.

Educación Para Todos was a program designed to teach literacy to sixteen million people. The first phase of the program (1978-80) was to develop the system and to acquire data as to the extent of the problem. Phase two (1980-82) was designed to improve and evaluate the program There were six aspects to the program. First, there was an expansion of the special primary programs, i.e., to provide more albergues escolares and more centers for the teaching of literacy. The second aspect was to expand primary education to meet national demand. Cursos comunitarios were offered in communities with 200-500 inhabitants. The teacher lived in the community and was paid 77.40 pesos per month which came from state, federal, and private sources. Teachers in this program completed nine years of school and attended a special training course. The teacher, besides teaching literacy, was responsible for helping the people with illness, agriculture, and other types of problems. To provide Spanish language instruction for Indian children was the third aspect of the program. This meant that pre-schools would teach the children to speak Spanish. In Huejutla, Hidalgo, I attended a meeting of Spanish language supervisors at the INI center on October 30, 1978. They used the Montessori method and classes were limited to twenty students. The fourth aspect of the program was to teach literacy to adults. This was done in Centers of Literacy in communities with more than 2,500 persons. Also, regional

centers of fundamental education were established in twenty-eight cities. The fifth aspect was to provide correspondence courses to teach literacy to adults. Also, the government developed 600 lessons of fifteen minutes duration for the radio which corresponded to the contents of the official textbooks for grades 4, 5 and 6. They were made into fifteen minute cassettes and then used in the classroom. The final goal was to integrate literate adults into regular educational programs and to develop the community by promoting cultural activities.

The program was coordinated by the Consejo Nacional de Educación de Grupos Marginados. This group consisted of 1) the Secretarío de Educación Pública, 2) the director of the social volunteers, 3) the secretaries of the state committees for the Educación Para Todos program, 4) one representative from the national parents association and 5) the Director General De Educación De Grupos Marginados.

Materials and a trained literacy worker were provided to small groups of illiterates. In the four-month training, illiterates learned to read, write, and do basic mathematics. The literacy worker used a kit based on the work of Paulo Freire.[22]

The literacy method called the palabra generadora or generative word method consisted of sixteen words that contain all the sounds of the language. These words were also important to the environment of adult illiterates. In Spanish, the concepts were shovel, piñata, vaccine, house, medicine, garbage, tortillas, milk, the market, the family, a cantina, work, guitar, education, Mexico, and a health clinic.

In the kit carried by the literacy worker were pictures of each of these objects. Each object was shown in a setting familiar to the illiterates. After the pictures were presented, there was a discussion of the picture so that the word had meaning for the illiterates. Next, the word was divided into syllables and the vowel in each syllable was changed. For example, the word for shovel is pala. The teaching progression was:

pa la	po lo
pe le	pu lu
pi li	

The students then combined the syllables and made new words. These words were discussed and written, and then the process began with the next word.

Students also studied mathematics. They were taught to write numbers up to 1,000, the concept of equal, subtraction, addition, multiplication, and division.

On May 15, 1981, a new program was announced --open education. At this time 6.6 million Mexicans over 15 could not read or write and 13 million more had not finished the primary school.

The new program expanded upon the goals of the Educación Para Todos program by offering primary and secondary schooling for adults.

By 1984, The Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos (INEA) was taking an active part in the literacy programs. In 1989, 4.2 million adults were illiterate and 20.2 million had not finished their elementary schooling. The decentralized approach was not working. The goals outlined in The educational modernization program 1989-1994 called for a more coordinated effort. The new plan called for 1) materials to be developed related to family life, working conditions and social environment, 2) special literacy program for ethnic groups, 3) radio and TV literacy programs, 4) a national system for crediting and certifying adult basic education, 5) a research network and 6) work with corporations and industries to provide workplace education.

In 1970, 91% of the population had not completed the six years of the primaria and the three years of the secundaria. Today that number is 58.6%

Literacy training was also done through television. Each person enrolled in a television course received a workbook, and the lessons on the television corresponded to the workbook lessons. Students enrolled in a television course received periodic visits from a literacy worker. The student phoned a toll-free number or wrote a letter to receive an answer to a problem or a question. In addition, the INEA developed materials for fourteen indigenous groups in the following languages: Maya, Náhuatl, Otomí, Purépecha, Totonaco, Mixteco and Zapoteco.

Table 4
The Adult Population That Did *Not* Complete Primaria And Secundaria (in millions)

Year	Adult Population (over 15)	Illiterates	%	NCP	%	NCS	%	NCB	%
1970	25,938.6	6,693.7	25.8	11,586.4	44.6	5,344.9	20.6	23,625.0	91.0
1980	37,927.4	6,451.7	17.0	9,442.2	24.9	9,202.4	24.0	25,096.4	66.1
1990	50,187.3	6,229.7	12.4	11,738.9	23.4	13,219.5	26.3	31,188.1	62.1
1991	51,731.7	6,239.9	12.1	11,868.3	22.9	13,831.4	26.7	31,939.6	61.7
1992	53,289.6	6,247.4	11.7	11,937.3	22.4	14,495.2	27.2	32,679.9	61.3
1993	54,856.1	6,251.3	11.4	12,012.0	21.9	15,142.1	27.6	33,405.4	60.9
1994	56,426.8	6,237.4	11.1	12,066.7	21.4	15,765.5	27.9	34,069.6	60.4
1995	58,000.8	6,213.1	10.7	12,159.1	21.0	16,350.0	28.2	34,722.2	59.9
1996	59,575.2	6,205.9	10.4	12,318.6	20.7	16,896.0	28.4	35,420.5	59.5
1997	61,147.9	6,170.8	10.1	12,479.8	20.4	17,442.6	28.5	36,093.2	59.0
1998 e	62,716.1	6,148.1	9.8	12,617.6	20.1	17,984.3	28.7	36,750.0	58.6

NCP= Number of adults who have not completed the primaria
NCS= Number of adults who have not completed the secundaria
NCB= Number of adults who have not completed the primaria and secundaria

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Statistics from INEA show that during the 1987-88 school year, 666,858 students were involved in the literacy groups. At the primary school level, 772,608 adults were involved in their programs and 203,103 adults were involved at the secondary level. About 803,300 adults learned basic educational skills at their places of work.[23]

Progresa is a welfare program that provides money to the poorest families.

Adult Education Today

In 1993, the definition of basic education changed. Prior to this date, the definition was only six years of primary school. Now, it is six years of primary school and three years of secondary school.

Table 4 details the gains made in basic education (primary plus secondary schooling) In 1970, 91% of the adult population (over 15 years of age) had not completed basic education. Today, that number stands at 58.6%. It should be noted that the illiteracy rate is only 9.8%

Table 5
The General Population And The Indigenous Population Of Adult Illiterates In 1995

			MALES		FEMALES	
	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%
Illiterates	6,222,813	10.60	2,393,794	8.42	3,829,019	12.66
15-24	789,853	4.04	364,434	3.81	425,419	4.26
25-34	861,010	6.07	327,211	4.80	533,799	7.24
35-44	1,031,267	10.50	369,390	7.42	661,877	12.54
45-54	1,111,686	17.08	406,211	12.76	705,475	21.20
55-64	1,027,864	24.62	385,907	19.17	641,957	29.70
65 +	1,401,133	34.78	540,641	28.61	860,492	40.24
Indigenous	1,585,282	38.35	571,736	27.76	1,013,546	48.87
15-24	231,629	20.09	83,202	14.60	148,427	25.46
25-34	261,553	29.72	84,318	19.39	177,235	39.82
35-44	303,474	40.56	102,025	27.38	201,449	66.53
55-64	231,698	59.31	88,950	45.17	142,748	73.68
65 +	265,839	66.40	107,423	53.12	158,416	79.94

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Table 5 focuses on the entire population of illiterates. Of the total number, 1,500,000 illiterates are indigenous. There are more women than men who are illiterate in the general population, that number is 8.42% to 12.66%. Also, as the groups increase in age, the illiteracy rate increases

The Mexican government established a welfare program called Progresa. It provides money to families on the condition that they send their children to school and to the doctor for

checkups and vaccines. The program is for the poorest in the country. Families with girls receive more money than those families with boys. This is an effort to reverse the lower status accorded to daughters in many indigenous families. This, of course, will have the effect of decreasing the illiteracy rates because more girls will be going to school.[24]

Adult education classes are held in special schools, the workplace, in churches and in the military

The INEA is involved in three areas of education, primary literacy, primaria and secundaria. In each area there are programs that reach out to a broad range of people. INEA has offices in 33 states. It does not do the teaching, but develops materials and coordinates between private companies and agencies of the government. They have specialists that train the teachers.

About 579,00 adults are enrolled in literacy (alfabetización) courses. The courses are conducted in 26 indigenous languages as well as Spanish. Primaria and secundaria classes are taught in many places. Often, a third shift is added to an elementary or secondary school. Companies receive tax breaks if they have an adult education program. The company provides a classroom and pays for the teacher who is usually a retired teacher or someone who works for the company. Sometimes churches sponsor programs. INEA supplies the books. In 1996-97, 696,000 adults studied in the primaria and 162,000 received a completion certificate. Over 680,000 attended the secundaria and more than 204,000 received a certificate of completion.[25]

Every eighteen year old serves one year in the military. They serve every Saturday. Those not completing the primary or secondary school are required to take classes as part of their military service.

There is a program for the military. Every eighteen year old is required to do military service on Saturday for one year. Those that are illiterate or have not completed primary or secondary school are required to study during this period. Usually soldiers who have completed the secundaria teach the uneducated. The program was started in 1997 and in that year, 535 soldiers learned to read and write, 4,810 received the primaria certificate and 13,617 received the secundaria certificate. In 1998, a total of 36,000 soldiers tutored 79,609 recruits to receive their basic education. By the end of 1998, the military was operating educational programs at 144 military bases and at 994 schools.

The program consists of twenty-four units or modules in language, math and science. Recruits are in groups of 15 with one teacher and two helpers. They follow the following schedule for 44 Saturday sessions during the year.[26]

8:00-8:20	Flag raising
8:20-9:10	Basic education (alfabetización, primaria or secundaria)
9:10-9:20	Recess
9:20-10:10	Basic Education
10:10-10:20	Recess
10:20-10:50	Basic Education

10:50-11:50	Life Skills (Being 18, AIDS, interpersonal relationships, sexuality, pregnancy, family - violence, addiction, human rights, community)
11:50-12:00	Recess
12:00-12:50	Military education. (Military service, social labor, the Mexican military, patriotic symbols, public security)
12:50-1:00	Recess
1:00-1:30	Military drills
1:30-2:00	Physical Education

Besides helping people within Mexico, INEA also provides textbooks for use with in the United States. Chapter three discusses these projects.

The current model of adult education is being revised. This model will focus on the material being relevant, improving the quality of teaching and equality in education. They hope to make the program more relevant by diversifying the teaching modules and strategies for teaching depending upon the group. There will be specific teaching modules for people who live in rural areas, cities and for men and women. Appropriate modules for the targeted group will be used. The quality of adult education will be improved by better materials, better training for instructors and more efficient bureaucracy. Equality refers to offering services to people who have historically been disenfranchised. The concentration will be on women, indigenous people, and farmworkers who have little or no education.

The 1998 proposal divides adult education into three segments--initial, primaria and secundaria. Each of the areas is divided into language and communication, mathematics, and science. Within each area are units of interest to specific groups. The whole system will involve twenty-four modules and after the alphabetización level, there will be a test and a certificate will be awarded. There will be an exam after each of the modules for the primaria and the secundaria. In the alfabetización module, the palabra gendora method will be used to teach reading and writing. The unit will last for eight months and six months will be to devoted to reading and writing. All of this will be introduced during the transition period and then suggestions from the states will be incorporated into the initial materials and models. It will take several years to fully implement the model.

Adult education in Mexico has been an important theme since the time of the revolution. Over the years, the expectations have increased and the current goal is to provide everyone with six years of primary schooling and three years of secondary school. Literacy campaigns were the main methods used in the past.

Today, there is an institutionalized program run by INEA. In 1970, 91% of the population had not completed the nine years of primary and secondary school. That number currently stands at 58.6% and major efforts are underway to reduce this number even more.

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[2] Frederico Rosas Barrera, "Vista Familiar" *Educación 2001* (January 1996) p. 52

[3] Paul de la Garza, "Teachers Strike Spotlights Mexico's Education Failures" *The Chicago Tribune* (May 22, 1997)

[4] *Informe 97-98* , p. 35

[5] *Informe 97-98*, p. 37

[6] *Informe 97-98*, p. 36

[7] Etty Haydee Estevez, "La Lucha Contra el Rezago" *Educación 2001* (January 1996) p.52

[8] Nicolas Cheetham, *Mexico, A Short History* (New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company,1971) p.277

[9] Allan Riding, *Distant Neighbors*. (New York: Random House, 1984) p.288

[10] T.A. Merrill and R. Miró *Mexico: A Country Study*

(Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.,1997) p.97

[11] "Mexico Indigena" p34

[12] *"Educación Indigena", Educación 2001,* (December 1995) p.11

[13] *"Educación Indigena,"* p.6. In a press release dated March 17, 1999, new programs for the teachers in Chiapas were announced. A new branch of the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional will be placed in Chiapas. About 30,000 teachers will receive training upgrades. In addition during the 97-98 academic year almost 485,000 school breakfasts were distributed.

[14] *Informe 97-98* p. 38

[15] Interview with Susani Justo in Mexico City, February, 1998. DGEI

[16] *Informe 97-98* p.44

[17] Interview with Ricardo Porras, February 1998, DGEI

[18] Dirección General de Educación Indigena *Plan y Programa de Educación y Capacitación de la Mujer Indigena* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1988) Interview with Prof. Alberto Hernandez, Director of the DGEI, February 21, 1989.

[19] Interview with Linguista Jose Carmen Díaz Miguel, DGEI, October 15, 1998

[20] Padgett, p.286

[21] Mary Joan Leonard, *Anti-Illiteracy Campaign in Mexico, 1944-46* (M.A. Thesis, U.C. Berkeley, 1958) p.61

[22] Instituto Nacional para la Educaciøn de los Adultos *Aprendiendo Juntos* (Mexico City: Secretariía de Educación Pública, no Date)

[23] *Informe* 1987-88, p.145

[24] Mary Beth Sheridan, "New Welfare initiative Up Against Price Controls" *Los Angeles Times*. Reprinted in *The News* (Mexico City, January 18, 1999)

[25] *Informe 97-98* p.111

[26] Instituto Nacional para la Educación de los Adultos, *Marco Operativo del Programa* (Mexico: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1977)

Chapter 3
What Mexican Programs Are Available In The United States?

Before NAFTA, Mexico was very reluctant to share her educational system with the world. My experience with various Mexican officials confirms this attitude. In 1978, I wrote several letters to the SEP for permission to conduct a study on the teaching of reading and writing in the Mexican public schools. The SEP failed to respond.

In the 1970's Mexico was reluctant to share its educational system with outsiders

In June of 1978, I went, in person, to the SEP and received assurances that the staff would help me with the study which would begin at the start of the new school year in September. I also toured the textbook commission facility. When I returned in September, officials from the Consejo Técnico de la Educación interrogated me about the purpose of my study. For three days, I answered questions. At the end of October, after waiting for almost a month, I received permission to do the study. Official orders came and I asked to present information about my study at each school. There was a reluctance to share "official" information[1]

In 1980, the Association of Mexican-American Educators held a conference in Mexico City. Mexican teachers were supposed to share their experiences with teachers from the U.S. However, the few Mexican teachers who attended the conference were outnumbered by officials from the SEP.

Since 1978 and the recent passage of NAFTA, the Mexican U.S. relationship has changed tremendously. Mexican educators regularly are sent to work in classrooms in the United States, Mexican researchers make presentations at conferences, there are associations with U.S. universities and there are state and national agreements. On the political level, Mexican-Americans helped to elect the Spanish speaking governor (George W. Bush Jr.) of Texas and in California, the Lt. Governor, and the head of the California Assembly are both Mexican Americans. The first trip of the newly elected governor of California (Gray Davis) was to visit President Zedillo of Mexico. In Los Angeles, a male Republican conservative (Bob Dornan) was defeated by an Latina woman (Loretta Sanchez) in a close vote the first time and by an overwhelming margin the second time. The relationship between Mexico and the United States is changing. Mexico and the U.S. have reached a number of agreements concerning education. These agreements are designed to improve literacy and the schooling of Mexican immigrants in the U.S. and they involve national, state, and local governments and even private agencies.

There are Mexican consulates in 40 U.S. cities.

On the U. S. side of the border, the agreements have been made with individual school districts, Mexican-American organizations, programs for migrant education, state departments of education, universities and to a limited extent, the U.S. Department of Education. At the onset, the agreements usually involve relatively small numbers of individuals so they do not receive wide-spread media attention even in national publications dedicated to education. However, when we examine these programs together, we see that the Mexican government has a substantial presence in educational programs in many parts of the U.S.

In "The Mexican Diaspora in California" a chapter in *The California Mexico Connection,* (1993) Carlos Gonzalez Gutiérrez explores the motivation for Mexico to invest resources in Mexicans living in the United States. The problem is complicated by the fact that there is no unified Mexican presence in the United States. The groups are divided by birth place, language, length of residence, region, subethnic considerations and class. Thus, Mexican policy must appeal to several groups at the same time. There is a growing influence of non-governmental actors on Mexico. These actors include the forces associated with bilingual trade and with pressure groups that can force the U.S. Congress and state legislators to pass laws favorable to Mexico. NAFTA was one example of this. There is a historical duty to protect citizens living in another country. Mexico's traditional position of immigration has been that the defense of Mexican immigrant's rights in the U.S. is a dominant and legitimate concern of their homeland. To this extent, forty consulates have been established in the United States and Mexican organizations such as the social security administration and the adult education program have worked to help Mexican nationals in the U.S. Another reason is that by promoting organizations linked to areas of Mexico, money is sent to improve villages and rural areas. Lastly, by encouraging close ties with Mexican nationals, the children of the first generation will also have a bond with Mexico.[2]

Since there is no office or clearinghouse that lists the Mexican programs in the U.S., the first step is to present the programs that are currently in operation. A word of caution is in order, however. Because of the increased frustration with educating inter-city youth, the programs offered by the Mexican government are continuing to expand. It is impossible to present all the programs that are in the planning stages or programs that have recently begun. Given this limitation, I will focus on educational agreements and programs involving literacy instruction or teacher training between Mexico and the U.S. at the national, state and local level that have been in existence for at least

two years. In addition, I will discuss the agreements with private agencies. The addresses and phone numbers for these organizations can be found in Appendix B.

National Projects

The educational agreements between Mexico and the U.S. are the results of a long and complicated process. The Echeverría administration (1970-76) in Mexico made attempts to meet with Mexican-American leaders to strengthen ties with Mexico, but differences among the organizations in the U.S. prevented any institutional relationship from developing. President López Portillo (76-82) did meet with Mexican-American organizations and this provided the impetus for the work in the U.S.[3]

Under the leadership of Graciela Orozco and later, of Roberto López, both of whom worked for the SEP, the number of programs with the U.S. increased. Mexican teachers went to Los Angeles and Louisiana, training programs were held for bilingual teachers from the Los Angeles area, bilingual programs in the San Jose Unified School District used Mexican textbooks and Mexican officials became visiting scholars in the U.S. The Office of International Relations in the SEP was in charge of these programs.[4]

In February of 1990, Carlos Salinas created the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad. The program promotes and runs joint projects linking Mexican communities and those of Mexican origin to Mexico. Mexican consulates throughout the U.S. administer the program and have established nonprofit Mexican cultural institutes. Currently, such institutes exist in 21 U.S. cities. The objectives of these programs are to promote business, tourism, culture, exhibits and artistic events, academic exchanges, scholarships, training for bilingual teachers, adult education programs, migrant education, medical insurance for Mexican workers in the U.S., sports, and housing.[5]

Each month, the list of projects related to education grows. In 1992, the Program was supplying Mexican textbooks for use in elementary and preschools. In addition, literacy and adult education materials were being sent to U.S. cities and states including: Dallas and Brownsville, Texas; Chicago; Philadelphia; the state of Michigan; and Fresno, San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles, California. In Madera County, California, textbooks in the indigenous language, Mixtec, are helping Mixtec farmworkers to become literate.[6] In 1990, the SEP sent 26 Mexican teachers to work for two-years in bilingual programs in Chicago. As of September 1993, twenty-one teachers remained and there were plans to increase this number.[7]

Mexican sponsored programs in the U.S. provide literacy and adult education materials, teacher exchange programs, speakers at conferences, and courses on culture and language.

In an interview with Sofia Orozco (sub-director of the program from Mexican communities abroad) in July of 1997, she stated that the bilingual exchange program began in 1995. The first year seventy teachers were sent to fourteen cities. Each Mexican state was assigned a quota and then committees were formed to pick the teachers. The teachers stayed in the U.S. from four to six weeks and they served as teacher's aides in summer school classes. The receiving U.S. district paid the air fare and housing costs. They also provided a stipend of $100-$200 per week. Then, the teachers in the U.S. visited Mexico for one or two weeks. They visited schools, observed and sometimes worked in Mexican classrooms. The visits could occur at any time during the year.

In 1997, Mexican teachers were in the following cities Detroit (16 teachers) Atlanta (17), Los Angeles (2) Portland (11), Denver (12), Sacramento (4), Philadelphia (1), Washington (1), El Paso (3), Orlando (7), San Jose (8), Chicago (50, St. Louis (6) Seattle (6), San Antonio (8) San Francisco (10) and Austin (2).

Mexican educators were also present at the annual conferences of the National Association for Bilingual Education. At the conference in 1991, Mexican educators spoke on theories of bilingual education and at the 1992 conference, they spoke on the new program of modernization and aspects of teaching the Spanish language.[8] The same themes were repeated at the conferences of the California Association for Bilingual Education. During the 1993 conference 40 specialists from 25 Mexican educational institutions organized displays and presented workshops on education in Mexico. Mexican educators also participated in the 1992 and 1993 conferences held by the Texas Association for Bilingual Education. Currently, it is routine to have speakers from Mexico at these conferences.

The Program for Mexican Communities Abroad developed a program for bilingual teachers in the United States. Courses are offered to districts through the Mexican Cultural Centers. Each course is five sessions of six hours each for a total of thirty hours. The courses offered are basic/intermediate Spanish, Mexican Culture and Civilization and Bicultural Classroom Interaction.[9]

The Mexican foreign service is the umbrella organization that coordinates the services of the various Mexican programs in the U.S. However, the programs have no central organization in the U.S. and the lack of such organization leads to some duplication of effort. Indeed, most people are not aware of the many activities in which the Mexican education establishment is involved in the U.S.

On August 17, 1990, Education Secretary Lauro Cavazos and Mexican Secretary of Public Education Manuel Bartlett Díaz signed a "Memorandum of Understanding" establishing closer

U.S./Mexican ties on education issues and programs. The agreement remained in effect until December 31, 1991, with provision for successive two-year extensions.

The original agreement included a stipulation for holding a border conference in October of 1991 to discuss the teaching of English in Mexico and of Spanish in the U.S. as well as teacher exchanges, migrant education, educational administration, educational research and innovation and improvement of intercultural understanding. The conference was held and it focused on technological education, teacher education and professional development in the field of education. More than 500 people attended with each of the border states sending a delegation.[10]

There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S. Department of Education and the Secretaría de Educación Pública

The activities for 1992-93 included: 1) exchanges of professors and researchers 2)an examination of ways to decrease dropout rates, 3) open education programs for Mexicans living in the U.S., 4) summer courses in Mexico, 5) help for migrant students, 6) joint efforts in environmental education, 7) linking U.S. and Mexican universities, 8) improving technical education in both countries, and 9) sending Mexican teachers to study in U.S. educational institutions.

On June 21, 1993, the Mexican and U.S. Secretaries of Education met and signed an annex to the agreement. In October of 1993 they met again in Ciudad Juárez. This 1995 conference focused on the professional development of teachers. Another conference was held in November of 1996. The last meeting was held in 1998 and the activities for 1998-2000 will focus on the areas of sharing information, special education, school to work programs, literacy and cooperation in higher education. Plans are being made, as of this writing, to add a website on international education to the main Department of Education's website.[11]

Before 1990, Fulbright grants were awarded by the USIA (United States Information Agency) and administered by a foreign service officer at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City. But no formal mechanism existed for supporting and expanding educational and cultural exchanges between Mexico and the U.S. though the U.S. had these types of agreements with forty other nations. In November 1990, Presidents Bush and Salinas signed an agreement to create the U.S.-Mexico Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange. The entire Fulbright budget devoted to Mexico--a total of just $2 million--became the first year's budget of the new organization. Mexico agreed to contribute $1 million as well. A ten member board of directors was named jointly by the Mexican foreign secretary and the U.S. ambassador; six of the ten came from the private sector. Carlos Ornelas became the first executive director of the commission.

There is a Fulbright exchange program for secondary teachers.

More than 150 grants were awarded during the first year of the new agreement. In addition to the Fulbright funds, the commission received pledges that totaled $1 million from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Mexican National Council for Culture and the Arts and the Bancomer Cultural Foundation. These funds were for non-academic cultural exchanges in such diverse fields as dance, translation, and library management (*Mexico Policy News*, Fall 1991). Research proposals in cultural scholarship were funded, as was support for conferences on a broad array of cultural themes. During 1998, over 500 grants were funded. Currently, there is a Fulbright exchange program for secondary and community college teachers. Under this program, the U.S. educator works in Mexico for one semester and then a Mexican teacher comes to the U.S. for a semester. During the 1998-99 school year, there were twenty-one Mexicans and twenty-one citizens of the United States involved in the program.[12]

State Projects

State projects are in many forms. Some evolve from border conferences, others are administered by private agencies under contract to the state or sometimes foundations develop from the original state funded project. It is impossible to list all of the cross border programs that exist, but an attempt has been made to list the major ones dealing with literacy, teacher education or student exchanges in the states of California, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas.

According to the Mexican foreign service, 40% of the Mexicans living in the U.S. reside in California. This coupled with the fact that Los Angeles is the second largest Spanish speaking city in the world provides the rationale for the involvement of the State of California and a number of its school districts in projects with Mexico.

In 1982, the Binational Program between Michoacán and California became a reality. The program simplifies the movement of Mexican migrants from the Mexican state of Michoacán to California. Many discussions seemed to be taking place in a vacuum because research on the educational and social plight of international migrant children was lacking. In 1984, Deborah Mounts received funding for a proposal that tracked students who spent part of the year in French Camp, California and the rest of the year in Villa Mendoza and Acuitzeramo, Michaocán, Mexico. Her study was based on observations, teacher questionnaires, and family portraits. Mounts' findings in terms of education were enlightening. The migrants followed traditional patterns that did not change from year to year. They spent an equal number of days in each country (184 in Mexico and 181 in the U.S.) with an

equal number of potential school days (142 days in the US and 140 days in Mexico). The school days in the US were divided between summer school (46) and regular school (96). Each time the students moved from Mexico to the U.S. or from the U.S. to Mexico they had to take placement tests, integrate into an ongoing program, become accustomed to new texts and learn to function with new teachers and classmates. Students tended to be placed in classes and programs below their ability levels.[13]

The Binational Transfer Document allows Mexican immigrants to attend school in the United States and Mexico.

In 1986, the Binational Project introduced the "Binational Transfer Document" to help correct this problem. As of 1996, ten states in the United States were part of the Binational Program. To register, the student must have a birth certificate and a transfer document validated with the binational seal. Students with proper documentation are accepted any time of the year in the Mexican schools and are placed at the same grade level in the U.S. school. No examinations are required. If a student does not have proper documentation, an initial assessment is free of charge, and this assessment is administered in local offices rather than at the state level. The transfer document also carries a student's grades. As of January 1, 1996, the "Binational Transfer Document" is in use in every Mexican state.

The California State Department of Education did not fund the Binational Program during the 1998-99 school year. An effort is currently underway to bring California back into the process. The program is working in the nine other states.

The Binational Transfer Document is in use in all Mexican states.

On June 26, 1991, a binational conference on literacy and adult education was held in Los Angeles. The purpose of the conference was to help the Los Angeles School District to study the problems and educational needs of the Mexican population that it serves. This conference focused on teaching skills, materials, evaluation, staff training and problems faced by literacy programs. A series of reports and several proposals for inter-institutional collaboration emerged from the discussions. Mexico sent representatives from the regional center of Adult Education and Literacy for Latin America (CREFAL), the National Institute for Adult Education (INEA), the Education Investigations Department of IPN, Northern Border College of Mexico, the Chihuahua centers for education studies, the Iberoamerican University and the National Pedagogic University.[14]

In August of 1993, the Mexican Secretary of Education signed an agreement with the Los Angeles Unified School District to provide Mexican school teachers to work in bilingual classrooms. The teachers returned to Mexico after working for two years in Los Angeles.

Currently, the program between Mexico and Los Angeles is a three year program. The teachers apply for the program and

Bilingual Mexican teachers work in selected U.S. cities.

then are interviewed by administrators from the United States. If they have the necessary English language skills and meet the requirements established by the Commission for Teacher Credentialing, they are issued non-renewable credentials and work in the school district receiving the same pay as a U.S. citizen would receive with this credential.

The California State Department of Education wants to expand the program and they want Mexico to send as many as 75 teachers per year to districts throughout the state.[15]

In New Mexico, in cooperation with the South West Development Labs, a teacher exchange program was developed between the Mexican states of Nuevo León and Guanajuato. Teachers spent two weeks in both countries living with the teacher and working in the classrooms. Several binational border conferences were held and from these efforts, a binational school was created in Columbus, New Mexico.

The California State Department of Education wants more Mexican teachers to come to California.

The history of the binational school is very interesting. Since 1949, Mexicans have been crossing the border to attend schools in the Deming Public School District in New Mexico. In fact, the superintendent ordered the school buses to park on the U.S. side of the border crossing so that the students would not have to walk on a two lane road to the school. When NAFTA came into existence, the population of Palomas, Mexico grew from 1,000 people to 10,000 people. With the help of the Southwest Educational Labs, discussions took place and the binational school was established. Columbus was chosen because the town did not have enough students to support a junior and senior high school thus students were bused the 32 miles to Deming for education above the elementary school level. The new bilingual school served 890 students, 500 from Mexico and 390 from the Columbus area. Mexican teachers came to the school and taught Spanish to the students and teachers from the U.S. went to the Mexican schools to teach English. There were many meetings and social events to facilitate the exchange of ideas between the Mexican and the U.S. teachers. The school lasted from the 1995-96 school year to the 1997-98 school year. Because of the massive importation of drugs and the resulting border restrictions to enter the United States, the border crossings became too time consuming for the Mexican students and the binational school had to close. Currently, the school district is looking for funding to support an interactive computer program between the schools in Palomas and Columbus.[16]

Mexican students crossed the border to attend the Binational School in Columbus, New Mexico

The Arizona-Mexico Commission and the Arizona-Sonora Commission established educational institutes, published a magazine called *Horizontes* and facilitated the exchange of students in elementary and middle school. In 1981, the Hands Across the Border project started as an educational exchange between the Palomino School District in Arizona and Arizpe, Sonora. On March 4, 1999, I talked to officials in the district and fifty students had just arrived from Mexico. The Mexican students (grade 5) would live with students in Arizona for the weekend. Thursday night, they attended a multicultural assembly and on Friday, they took a bus tour to Tombstone, Arizona. Friday night was spent with the families and on Saturday, the students returned to Mexico. The situation would reverse in the fall. The current Mexican fifth graders would become the hosts for the students from Arizona. Parents, teachers and community members were part of the trip. In 1986, the program became the basis for the Hands Across the Border foundation.

Hands Across the Border has between four and five thousand students per year participate in exchanges between Mexico and the U.S.

During the 1998-99 school year, between four and five thousand students participated in the exchanges in 65 schools in Arizona and one school in New Mexico. They obtained money through fundraising in the schools and through mini-grants. The average cost of a trip was between $2,000-$3,000 for each of the 20-30 students in the group. In areas where the program is new, there are adult exchanges to plan the trips.[17]

In Texas, the state cooperates and provides partial funding to the CRESPAR program from John Hopkins University. The Success for All program provides help in preschool, elementary and secondary schools through professional development training, tutoring and family support. The Success for All program is being used in Juárez, Mexico and there is professional development training throughout the Mexican state of Chihuahua. Currently, a private foundation based in Juárez, Mexico is funding a 120 hour training course for principals in Chihuahua.[18]

Mexican and Texas administrators worked together to provide training in administering schools.

In *Children of the Frontera* (1996) Calderón talks about the Leadership Enhancement Academy for binational education. Principals, assistant principals and coordinators for El Paso and Ciudad Juárez worked together to create this academy. The goal of the organization is to cultivate relationships, professional development on both sides of the border, develop an integrated approach to address the multiple aspects of bilingual education and to conduct research and evaluation.[19] Another project described in *Children of the Frontera* is the Border Colloquy Project. This was done in cooperation with the Southwest Educational Developmental Laboratory. In March of 1994, SEDL organized a

series of meetings with local and state education officials. The vision statement of the group follows.

Binational Vision Statement
Developed by Participants in the SEDL border Colloquy
Austin Texas August 1-2 1994

We in the Mexico-United States border region, looking toward education in the year 2010, consider our children to be our most precious resource. Therefore, every individual has the right to equal educational opportunities through which she/he will develop self-esteem dignity, cultural pride, understanding of others, and the capacity to become a positive, contributing member of society.

To respond to the needs of this international, multilingual multicultural community, we will have a binational educational system that is open, flexible, integrated, of high quality and adapted to the region's common needs in an atmosphere of community. Recognizing the family as critical in the child's development, this system will offer health and human services and family education. It will include staff development and programs teaching environmental improvement, international understanding, cultural and moral traditions and values and the skills to compete in a global economic society. It will use technology resources and multicultural multilingual strategies. [20]

As often happens, the individuals responsible for this project no longer work for SEDL and the new management has a different focus so SEDL no longer sponsors the Border Colloquy Project.

Private Agencies

One Stop Immigration is a community based nonprofit organization that started in 1972. In 1975, it was incorporated and began to work on legalization and immigration issues. The major funding source is the city of Los Angeles. In 1987, the group applied to the California State Department of Education for permission to offer classes in history and in English as a second language (ESL) in order to prepare people for the federal amnesty program. Since many of the students were illiterate in Spanish, the program had to be expanded beyond its original scope.

During April of 1990 the INEA provided training for staff members of One Stop Immigration, In August 1990 Mexico shipped seven trailer loads of INEA materials to Los Angeles (153,715 elementary and secondary books for use with adults). Teachers came from Mexico to teach the One Stop Immigration staff to use the materials. Since 1988, One Stop has served more than 87,000 people.

In August 1992, about 9,000 people attended their schools in 21 service centers located throughout California. After completing the primaria or secundaria program, people applied to take the test that earned them a Mexican primary or secondary certificate. In 1992, some 3,000 people enrolled in the primaria program and about 30 smaller agencies in the Los Angeles area used the Mexican materials.[21]

Due to cuts in funding, the program has been drastically reduced. The new goal is adult education, ESL training, and a citizenship program. They have helped 50,000 people to become legal residents and 25,000 people to become citizens of the United States. Currently, they are not using the Mexican materials and a very small percentage of their students are illiterate. Most come to the United States with at least a fourth grade education from Mexico. However, if funding is increased, they will probably return to the use of Mexican materials.[22]

Another small program in California is the Los Niños program. Each year they send between 12 and 16 interns to teach first and second grade classes in the primary schools of Tijuana. The interns work for six weeks during the summer and they live with Mexican families in Tijuana.

Private agencies are involved in U.S./Mexico projects. They include: One Stop Immigration, Los Niños, ProfMex, the International Reading Association, the Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation and the Intercultural Development Research Association.

In 1981, nine U.S. universities in the Southwest (U.T.--Austin, U.T.- El Paso, University of New Mexico, New Mexico State University, University of Arizona, Arizona State University, San Diego State University, UCLA and Stanford) formed PROFMEX to find mechanisms to enhance communications and collaboration among researchers on contemporary issues in U.S./Mexican relations. PROFMEX was joined by ANUIES (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Institutos de Educación Superior) and together the two organizations sponsor research, hold meetings, print a monograph series, print a newsletter and offer advice on border issues. Since 1992 PROFMEX membership has included over 70 member institutions in the U.S., Mexico and Canada.

In 1992, PROFMEXIS, a computer network, was established with the support of the Ford Foundation. PROFMEXIS gives network users customized e-mail communication, database access and a file-transfer capability. The communications center in Mexico is the Centro de Tecnología e Información with the database and communication facilities provided by the University of Mexico. The permanent home for the database in the U.S. is at the Austin campus of the University of Texas. Through this system scholars have customized access to the holdings of major research libraries and to a diversity of public databases in the social and natural sciences.[23]

Perhaps the most important undertaking of PROFMEX has been the summary of research published in both languages. It is printed by the Center for U.S. Mexican Studies, University of California San Diego and by El Colegio de la Frontera Norte. The 1994 edition contained 896 research projects of which 38 were in the field of education.

The International Reading Association publishes a journal titled *Lectura y Vida* and Mexican authors contribute articles. At this time, there is a local council in Guadalajara and one in Nuevo León. Individuals from the Guadalajara chapter participated in a presentation at the International Reading Association's 44th annual convention at San Diego, May 2-7, 1999.

Another agency is the Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation. This foundation is governed by a binational board of directors including representatives of the National Council of La Raza, Intercultural Development Research Association, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, University of Texas, Televisa, Univision, American GI Forum, National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, Arizona State University, the secretaries of Public Education and Foreign Relations in Mexico, U.S. Hispanic chamber of Commerce and the League of United Latin American Citizens. The organization focuses on a wide range of activities concerning Mexicans on both sides of the border. On program of particular interest is "Teaching Certificates in Bilingual-Bicultural Education for Mexican Teachers Living in the U.S." The program offers a bachelor's degree in 2 1/2 years for Mexican teachers who are legal residents of California. The program is at the California State University at Long Beach and in 1998, 27 of the 30 participants graduated.

The Intercultural Development Research Association is sponsoring Project Alianza which is a teacher preparation and leadership development initiative. This project is in cooperation with the Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation. In five years, the project will enable 200 individuals to teach and become leaders in educational issues in bilingual, binational and bicultural settings. They plan to target 1) bilingual teacher aides, 2) students in traditional bilingual teacher prep programs and Mexican trained primaria teachers who are legal residents of the United States. This will be accomplished at five universities in both Mexico and the U.S. and participating school districts will create opportunities for novel teacher preparation laboratories and practice.

Implications

The border between the U.S. and Mexico is never wider than a river and there are large Spanish speaking communities on both sides of that river. Because of socioeconomic conditions, Mexicans

in the U.S. are, as a group, not very prosperous. This has been recognized by both the government and private agencies. A truly international effort to improve the conditions of Mexicans that live in the U.S. is now underway.

Pursuing literacy for all members of the family, cultural exchanges and increased teacher training have been shown to be effective ways of providing education. The use of Mexican textbooks, and the incentive of a Mexican diploma--coupled with mutual attempts to understand education in both countries--are paying off. As education becomes more important to the family, the economic level of the family will rise and the younger children will stay in school longer. In addition, U.S. educators are learning from their Mexican counterparts how to handle the unique strengths of the Mexican students. The prospects are encouraging.

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[1] [1]Robert Miller, "Mexican Immigrants Can Achieve in U.S. Schools". *CATESOL Journal.*, (1991) vol. 4, no.1. pp 91-96.

[2] Carlos Gonzalez Gutierrez, "The Mexican Diaspora in California" in *The California Mexico Connection* Abraham Lowenthal and Katrina Burgess eds (Stanford CA: Stanford University press, 1993)

[3] Allan Riding, *Distant Neighbors.* (New York: Random House,1984) p. 475.

[4] Robert Miller, "Mexican Immigrants Can Achieve in U.S. Schools". *CATESOL Journal.*, (1991) vol. 4, no.1. pp 91-96.

[5]Díaz de Cossio, Roger. "Mexico and the Mexican Origin Population in the U.S." (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores., January 24, 1992)

[6] Interview with Sofia and Graciela Orozco, Mexico City, June 15,1992

[7]*La Paloma* (September-December, 1993) Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

[8]*La Paloma* (January-February,1991) Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

[9] Brochure "Immersion Courses for Bilingual Teachers in the United States" Mexico: Comunidades Mexicanans aen El Extranjero. (no date)

[10]*Report on the Border Conference on Education October 6-8, 1991.* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Education)

[11] Telephone interview with Rafael Nevarez, U.S. Department of Education, February 24, 1999

[12] Telephone Interview with USIA officials March 1, 1999.

[13]Deborah Mounts, *The Binational Child* (California: State Department of Education, Department of Migrant Education, 1986)

[14]*La Paloma* (October-December,1991) Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores

[15] Telephone Interview March 2, 1999 with Carlos de la Torre, Secretaría de Educación Pública representative in Los Angeles.

[16] Telephone interview with Carlos Viramontes, Superintendent of the Deming Public Schools March 2, 1999

[17] Telephone interview with Judy Freeman of the Hands Across the Border Foundation March 4, 1999

[18] Telephone interview with Margarita Calderon, March 8, 1999

[19] Margarita Calderon, "Bilingual, Bicultural and Binational Cooperative Learning Communities for Students and Teachers" in *Children of La Frontera*. Judith Flores (ed) (Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. Charleston, West Virginia, !996)

[20]Betty Mace-Matluck. and M. Boethel, "Exploring Binational Educational Issues: A Report form the Border Colloquy Project in *Children of La Frontera*. Judith Flores (ed) (Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools. Charleston, West Virginia, !996)

[21] Telephone interview with Angelina Flores, August, 1992

[22] Telephone interview with Mario Evilla, Controller, One Stop Immigration Feb. 26, 1999

[23] *Mexico Policy News* (1991, Fall) PROFMEX San Diego State University, Institute for Regional Studies of the Californias

Chapter 4
What Strategies Produce Results In The Classroom, Engage Parents, And Increase The Success Rate Of Mexican And Mexican-American Students?

When I do presentations at conferences on Mexican education, I show a slide that contains two paper clips. One paper clip is the American variety with rounded ends. The other is a Mexican paper clip that is square on the top and the bottom is v shaped. Both paper clips serve exactly the same function even though they are different. Keeping this in mind, we must look at Mexican education as different (not superior or inferior) from the model used in the United States.

When working with students and parents from Mexico, the most important thing to remember is that the groups are divided by birth place, language, length of residence, region, subethnic considerations and class. What works for one group may not work for others. This chapter will focus on the strengths of the Mexican student, teacher strategies, parent involvement and the elements needed for effective school programs.

Strengths of the Mexican Students

There is no check list of programs or processes which work with Mexican immigrants. However, the most important thing we can to help Mexican students is to develop an accepting attitude towards their culture and the experiences that they bring to the United States.

The first thing to determine is the student's hometown in Mexico and the amount of schooling the student has received. Education in Mexico has three levels, grade 1-6 is the primaria, grades 7-9 is the secundaria and grades 10-12 is the media superior school. (A student attends the first year of the secundaria, versus seventh grade in the United States.) There are no social promotions in Mexico and about 85% of the population graduates from the sixth grade. Students from the cities who attended the secundarias or the media superior schools probably will learn very rapidly. These students have taken English courses as part of the curriculum in the secundaria. However, those students with less than six years of education and those from the countryside may struggle.

If the student attended a public school in Mexico, there is a good chance the student will only know how to print Also, most instruction is with the whole group. Individualized instruction and the inquiry method are not common in Mexico. Modeling is prevalent: the teacher writes the project on the board, one or two students do the work on the board, and then the rest of the class copies the board work in their notebooks. As a teacher in the United States, I use this information in two ways. In my beginning ESL classes, I often rewrite the paragraphs and then have the students copy my paragraph on their papers. Whenever the students do not understand my directions, I model exactly what I want them to do. We may do the same type of assignment four or five times until the students understand the expectations of the teacher.

Modeling is used in almost all classes in Mexico.

Phonetic spelling is a strength for Mexican students. Spanish has 29 letters and 24 sounds so it is relatively easy to spell Spanish words. English has 26 letters and 41 sounds. English spelling depends on configuration and memorization, so I have the students write the word three times on a paper. Next, they turn the paper over and write the word from memory. I do this until they know the words.

Mexican students who have attended the schools in Mexico will be more advanced in mathematics than students in the United States. They should be given the opportunity to achieve.

Teacher Strategies

As mentioned in the introduction, the idea of universal public education is less than 80 years old. The students and their families often do not see school as a way to improve. Family loyalty may mean that the students must work to support the family or stay home and baby sit the younger children. This, of course creates a high rate of tardies or absenteeism and many of these students fail.

Make the students welcome in the classroom. Focus on culture, graduates, Mexican holidays and customs.

Mexican culture is very old and very interesting. Let's make these students welcome by putting pictures on the walls that reflect the culture of Mexico. Another idea is to take photographs of all the students, especially at graduation. This provides role models for the new students.

Activities should be held in the classroom that show respect for the beliefs of the students. Acknowledging Mexican holidays, using piñatas during birthdays, using Spanish words and having students report on their country are ways of showing respect. We can discuss aspects of Mexican culture in the classroom and through assignments that compare the Mexican way of life with life in the United States. Areas of difference in school include: cleanliness in the schools, administration of the school, discipline, grading

systems, celebrations, food, textbooks, class size, and the length of the school year. These discussion topics can be easily combined with literature. For intermediate ESL students, we write a paragraph about an aspect of Mexican culture. The teacher then selects vocabulary from the paragraph, types the paragraph about four inches down the page and then writes questions based on the paragraph. In addition, a picture is added and two or three discussion questions are included. The paper is photocopied and distributed to the class. This serves as a base for discussion, especially if there are many cultures represented in the class. A sample is shown below.[1]

ABRAZO

greet each other a big hug to welcome a family member

away for a long time put your arms around

In Mexico and other parts of Latin America, people greet each other with a big hug. This hug is called an "abrazo." The abrazo is used to welcome a family member who has been away for a long time. It is also used to greet someone you like. The way to do it is to put your arms around the other person's back. Squeeze hard and enjoy the hug.

Questions:

1. What is an abrazo?
2. When is the abrazo used?
3. Where do you put your arms?
4. What do you do after you position your arms?

Questions for Discussion:

1. How do people in your culture greet each other?
2. What parts of the body are used to greet someone?

Publish stories written by students.

In my classes, we publish a book called *Coming to California* in which each ESL student has contributed a story. The stories are created from three paragraphs, i.e., the day you left Mexico, the trip, and the first days in California. Each paragraph is written, edited by other students, checked by the teacher and rewritten by the student. Next, the students take the best paragraph or combine the sentences and paragraphs into a multiple paragraph essay. (the order of the paragraphs is changed so that all the stories are not the same) Each student receives a draft of his/her paper, and it is again corrected. The final draft and illustrations are placed in the book, and then the book is ready to be published. One copy of the book is bound and placed in the library. (This is done at a local copy center) The book in printed lengthwise on "8 1/2" X 11" paper folded in half and stapled on the center fold. Each student receives a copy of the book and we use the book to teach various reading skills.

The following story appeared in volume 2 of *Coming to California*. (May 1991)

> I am from Michoacán, Mexico. When I came to the US, I was very sad because I lived in Mexico with my grandmother for fifteen years. I was happy because I would like to live with my mother and father who have lived in the USA for fifteen years.
>
> The day I left for the USA, all my family cried and me too. Someday, I will go back. I went on the bus with my mother. The trip took four days and I liked the bus because it had a bathroom. I was scared because I didn't know anything. My mom told me that in San Jose I would learn many things and have many friends. I would go to school and speak English and know many teachers. I cried when my mom told me all of this. Now, I have friends and nice teachers.
>
> I remember my first day in California. I stayed all day in my home, but the next day I went to church. After, I went with my mother and father to Shakey's and Pizza Hut. I liked it very much because in Mexico, I never ate pizza. We went to the shopping center and I liked the stores because they had many things. What I didn't know, I liked. After two weeks, my mom, my father, my brother, my sister and I went to Great American and played all the day. At first, I was scared but after awhile, I wasn't scared because my mother helped me all the time. I met my best friend, Margarita, and she helped me in school. I know many nice teachers who helped me to learn to speak English. Now, I have many friends.

The Mexican teacher is well trained and has received more on the job training than the first year teacher in the United States. These teachers work hard with the students and we must respect what the students have learned.

Recognition of students is an important part of the Mexican classroom.

Oral fluency is appreciated in Mexico and students should be able to demonstrate this strength within the classroom. Speeches and discussions are very important.

The teachers in Mexico also honor students by putting them in charge of projects. For example: if groups of students are coming to the board, then a student is put in charge to manage the groups. Recognition is an important part of the Mexican classroom. Teachers praise students and the class claps when students are successful.

Parent Involvement

Parents are involved in the Mexican schools. They pay a fee to the family association, buy uniforms for their children, contribute to the maintenance of the school and many have been involved in developing goals for their elementary schools. In the United States we need to find ways to involve Mexican parents and this needs to be done through many small efforts rather than one grand effort.

The most difficult step in involving parents is to develop a master list of parents who may be interested in the school. One way to do this is to ask each teacher and staff member to suggest a parent or two. The master list quickly develops. These people can then be invited to special parent groups or to serve on advisory committees.[2]

Mexican parents are involved in the schools.

The next step might be to discover the issues that concern parents. One solution is the parent coffee. A parent is asked to invite a few neighbors for coffee and dessert. An administrator, a counselor, and about six teachers are asked to attend (some must speak Spanish). The school can offer to pay for the dessert and coffee. There is no formal agenda. Parents and teachers are introduced and then the questions start. This time is used by parents to clear up rumors, learn about school policies and communicate their expectations of the school. Parents are invited to visit the school. In addition, whenever a question that needs to be researched is asked, the parent is called the next day with the information. From the information obtained at several coffees, new programs are developed.

The parent coffee is a way of involving parents.

From my experience, Mexican parents will participate in school workdays on Saturdays, they will help bring food to multicultural events and they will attend special classes for parents. Some will come and volunteer to help during the school day. These parents are also excellent resources for staff development activities.

In Mexico, there is one school system with one set of textbooks, one curriculum, and one set of rules. We need to be aware that Mexican parents are operating under this frame of reference

Another concern of school focuses on homework. Olsen's questions on homework are summarized in the table.[3] (The S.E. Asian data is provided as a contrast) It is clear that most Mexican students will do homework and that many are not receiving the help that they need. In Mexico, the textbooks are given to the students and the older siblings have the opportunity to help their younger brothers and sisters. We do not do this in the United States. The data in the chart suggests that friends help Mexican students with their homework. Perhaps we need a buddy system, a tutoring center or tutors to help the students.

Parents participate in school work days, multicultural events, and some will attend classes for parents.

Table 6

Homework and Schoolwork

Time Spent Doing Homework Nightly

	Less than 30 minutes	up to 2 hours	more than 2 hours
All	17%	53%	30%
Mexican	33	56	11
S.E. Asian	7	53	40

Mexican students do homework

Who Helps Immigrants With School Work?

	Immigrant friend	Native friend	Parents	Sibling	Tutor	Staff	Teacher	No one
All	26%	4%	9%	15%	4%	3%	22%	17%
Mexican	14	3	8	19	3	3	26	24
S.E. Asians	31	7	5	11	2	1	33	10

Source: Laurie Olsen. *Crossing the Schoolhouse Border, Immigrant Students and the California Public Schools.*, p. 88-89

Characteristics of Effective Schools

In 1995, the Secretary of Education of the United States initiated the Hispanic Dropout Project to determine what can be done to reduce the dropout rate of Hispanic students. Hearings were held in various parts of the United States, programs were reviewed and a final report was written in 1998[4]. The NCLA (National Council of La Raza) summarized the five characteristics of effective schools.[5] I am going to list their main points and then

comment on each in terms of possible schoolwide efforts for Mexican students.

1. Schools must have very high academic and behavioral standards for their students.

In Mexico, the parents are involved with the writing of a mission statement for the school. Mexican parents should be involved in the writing of this type of document in the U.S. schools. Obtaining the support of the parents for high academic and behavior standards is the first step in achieving results.

A mission statement developed by the parents can help.

2. These standards must be communicated very clearly and the schools must provide support to meet those standards.

There is no better way of communicating standards than by having the parents involved in creating standards. Schoolwide reform programs for Mexican students are plentiful. In a 1997 report of the Hispanic Dropout Project on elementary and junior high school programs, five schoolwide programs are detailed, seven classroom instructional programs are discussed and six language arts programs are reviewed.[6] A program for high school students who are in the middle academically is AVID. The purpose of the AVID program is to restructure the teaching methods of an entire school and to open access to the curricula that will ensure four-year college eligibility to almost all students.[7]

AVID is a program that raises standards in the school

3. Schools must connect their students in meaningful ways to adults. Strategies include a group of teachers accepting responsibility for the same students, older students mentoring younger students, etc.

One very successful program is Link Crew. As of this writing, 300 high schools and 59 middle schools are involved in this program. Older students act as mentors for in-coming students. Through a series of training programs, the students bond together and both the older and younger students benefit. When there are substantial numbers of limited English speakers, the first hour of the training is in English and then the students are divided into language specific groups. This not only provides efficient dissemination of the materials, but it provides a means so that the older students can share their experiences with students of the same race. In some schools, the older students work with students in the middle school. At the middle school level, the program is called Web Crew.

Link Crew is a successful way of mentoring younger students.

4. The schools must connect their students to possible futures in college and the workforce.

Use the Mexican community to provide speakers about college and real life experiences.

It has been my experience that graduates of the school love to return and share their experiences with the student body. An ex-student who just published a book returned to our school for a booktalk. The event was well attended and it was interesting to learn what it was like to be a Chicana in our school in the 1970's. Brothers and sisters of Mexican staff members and Mexican parents have returned to the school and discussed their experiences in the world of work.

5. The school must provide families with useful information about how their children are doing.

Communicate with parents in their language.

Sending school communications in two languages, providing food as an incentive to attend back to school nights, making translators available, and native speakers calling the home are all ways of helping parents to obtain information about their children. If school research determines that parents are not literate, then programs can be set up through the Mexican consulates to help these parents receive Mexican primaria and secundaria certificates. Also, in partnership with Western Union, the National Council of La Raza has developed a literacy curriculum targeting Latino adults. The Aprender Es Poder curriculum is for community based education programs as well as family literacy and adult education programs housed in churches, libraries, schools, local businesses and unions. This program provides immigrants with life skills applicable to the issues they face as community members, family members and workers. Through basing these programs at the school, the communication between the home and the school and between groups of parents will increase and all will benefit.

Provide family literacy programs.

The international Reading Association published (1995) *A Survey of Family Literacy in the United States.* This book is an excellent resource for those wanting to start a family literacy program.

Mediate and monitor all of the parent groups on campus to keep problems to a minimum

Laurie Olsen points out the importance of having several programs that meet the needs of the students.[8] No one strategy with work with all of the students. She also feels that teachers need training and assistance in effective, respectful two way communication with parents particularly across languages and cultures. Community organizations must be strengthened to serves as a base of parent and community advocacy on school reform. Schools need to conscientiously design mechanism to mediate, facilitate, and nurture relationship among parent groups. If one parent group feels that too much money is going to another group, bitterness results. Lastly, Olsen states that the specific strategies schools design for parent involvement need to be

broadened to include the many different loving people in a student's life who fill what has traditionally been viewed as the parent role in our culture.

The people from Mexico have come here for a better life. They left Mexico because life was hard and in the United States they face different problems such as a high cost of living, drugs, violence and racism. As educators, we realize that the way out of poverty is through education and we also realize that this is a slow process with many setbacks. Mexican children, when asked to choose between school and the family will pick the family. It is discouraging to see students make it to the second semester of the twelfth grade and then drop out because the family needs the student to work. However, we cannot give up hope. We must offer praise and encouragement and we must respect the values and the experiences that these children bring to the classroom.

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[1] Robert Miller, *Multicultural Stories for the Beginning ESL Student* (Los Gatos, CA: Paradox Press,1985) Out of print

[2] Many of the ideas in this section can be found in P César Romero's, *Strategies to Involve Parents in the Schools.* (Los Gatos: Paradox Press, 1982) Mr. Romero was able to involve hundreds of Hispanic parents in the activities of the school.

[3] Laurie Olsen, *Crossing the Schoolhouse Border, Immigrant Students and the California Public Schools.* (San Francisco: California Tomorrow, 1988)

[4]Walter Secada, Rudolfo Chavez-Chavez,et al. *No More Excuses, The Final Report of the Hispanic Dropout Project.* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, February 1998),

[5]Maria Fisher, *Latino Education Status and Prospects State of Hispanic America 1998* (Washington: National Council of La Raza,1998)

[6] Olatokumbo S. Fashola, Robert Slavin, et al. "Effective Programs for Latino Students in Elementary and Middle Schools" Http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/miscpubs/used/hdp/2/index.htm

[7]AVID, http.//www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/sdavid

[8]Laurie Olsen . *The Unfinished Journey: Restructuring Schools in a Diverse Society* (San Francisco: California Tomorrow,1994)

Appendix A
Making School More Effective for Hispanic Students

Table 7

Groups Responsible for Organizing Activities

	PARENTS	CLASSROOM	SCHOOL
Hispanic Mission Statement	X		
AVID		X	X
Link Crew		X	X
Inviting Hispanic Professionals to speak to the students	X	X	X
Communications to parents in Spanish		X	X
Inviting successful Hispanic students back to school		X	X
Translators at meetings and at open house	X	X	X
Family literacy program			X
Teach through modeling		X	
Acknowledging Hispanic Customs		X	X
Decorations in classroom recognize different cultures		X	
Multicultural activities	X	X	X
Publishing student work		X	X
Create a master list of parents who want to be involved	X		X
Parent coffees	X		
Buddy system		X	X
Community workdays to repair the school	X	X	X

Programs

	National	State	Private
Primary and Secondary Certification		X	
Mexican Textbooks	X		
Mexican Teachers in U.S. schools	X		
Fulbright Grants	X		
Success for All		X	
Los Niños		X	
Hands Across the Border		X	
Binational Project		X	
ProfMex			X
Mexican and American Solidarity Program			X
Project Alianza			X
Teacher Exchange	X	X	

APPENDIX B
Addresses Of Organizations and Programs that Focus On Helping Mexican and Mexican-American Students

Aprender es Poder

This new literacy program is sponsored by the National Council of La Raza and focuses on adults. The goal is to satisfy work related objectives, to help people participate in their communities and to help people gain personal fulfillment.
Alejandra Domenzain, Project Coordinator (202) 776-1756

AVID

This program is sponsored by the San Diego County Office of Education and focuses on helping students succeed in the most rigorous curriculum, enter mainstream activities in the school, increase enrollment in four-year colleges and become educated and responsible participants and leaders in a democratic society.
http.//www.sdcoe.K12.ca.us/sdcoeavid

Educación 2001

This monthly journal provides information on Mexican education The cost is $60.00 per year and can be purchased from:
Instituto Mexicano de Investigaciones Educativas S.C.
Educación 2001
Cuautla #10 Colonia Condesa
CP06140 Mexico, DF Mexico

Federal Government

The United States Department of Education signed an agreement with Mexico concerning education. They conduct binational conferences.
International and Territorial Affairs Room 3047
United States Department of Education
Washington, D.C. 20202

Hands Across the Border Foundation

This foundation promotes exchanges between school in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Teléphone 602 705-4047

Intercultural Development Research Association

IDRA is involved in many cross border projects and they publish a newsletter. Requests for the newsletter can be made to Michelle L. Aguilera, 5835 Callaghan Road Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228-1190 or on-line at: http://www.idra.org/Newslettr

Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center

Publisher of information about cross-border organizations in Mexico and the United States, including a directory, *Cross Border Links*, and a periodical, *Border Lines*.
P.O. Box 4506 Albuquerque, NM 87196 (505) 842-8288

Link Crew

This program provides training so that older students act as mentors for younger students. Contact Phil Boyte 1-800 874-1100

Los Niños

This program is designed to promote long-term community development in Tijuana's colonias.
Los Niños 287 G Street Chula Vista CA 91910 619 426-911

The Mexican and American Solidarity Foundation

This foundation is composed of four of the principal Mexican American and Hispanic organizations in the United States as well as the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, the Intercultural Development Research Association and the Mexican Ministries of Foreign Relations and Public Education.
Graciela Orozco, Executive Director http.//www.fsma.com.mx

One Stop Immigration and Educational Center

Assistance in gaining legal status and citizenship, including literacy, ESL, and citizenship classes.
3600 Whittier Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90023 (213) 268-8472

Program for Mexican Communities Abroad

La Paloma newsletter (free), List of courses in Mexican Universities
Homero 213-13, Col. Chapultepec Morales
C.P. 11570 Mexico, D.F. Mexico
(To subscribe to La Paloma)
Apartado Postal 105-234 Polanco
CP 11581 Mexico, DF Mexico

PROFMEX

Research, conferences, literature on Mexico Computer data banks in US and Mexico, *International Guide to Research on Mexico*
(310) 206-8500

APPENDIX C
Web Sites On Mexico

A. http.//www.inegi.gob.mx (English) Statistics on Mexico
B. http.//www.anuies.mx (English) Information on higher education
C. http.//www.mexico online.com//websites.htm (English) Indexes newsgroups about Mexico and travel, culture, etc.
D. http.//www.novedades.com.mx/the-news htm (English) *The News* . Mexico City's English language newspaper.
E. http//world presidencia.gob.mx//index.htm (English) News from the president of Mexico.
F http.//www.sep.gob.mx (Spanish) Secretaría de Educación Pública

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